



THE MEDEA OF SENECA



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The Medea of Seneca

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

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THE
MEDEA OF SENECA

WITH AN
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY
Hugh MacMaster Kingery, Ph.D.

PROFESSOR IN WABASH COLLEGE

REVISED EDITION

CRAWFORDSVILLE, IND.
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR
1900

L. ANNAEI SENECAE TRAGOEDIAE

THE
MEDEA OF SENECA

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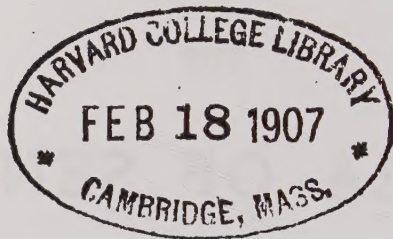
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The Editor

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HUGH MACMASTER KINGERY

PREFACE

The kindly reception accorded the first edition of this work encourages the author to believe that it meets an actual want. The demand, continued after the edition was exhausted, has led to the publication of this revision, which embodies the results of further study and of personal experience with the book in the classroom, as well as many helpful hints from others who have used it. The introduction and some of the notes have been condensed, other notes amplified, or new ones introduced, and all placed on the same page with the text.

The text is practically unchanged from the first edition, and the general plan of the notes remains the same.

WABASH COLLEGE, Nov. 1, 1900.

FROM THE PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The *Medea* has been chosen for presentation because of its comparative excellence and because its authenticity is almost unquestioned. In the preparation of the notes it has been assumed that the reader is familiar with the essentials of the language, and only such points of form and syntax are noticed as present unusual difficulty. No grammatical references are given. In dealing with the subject-matter the aim has been rather to suggest than to state, thus leaving much for the student's own research to develop. Above all has

it been desired, by the insertion of necessary references to authorities and cross-references to the text, to guide him to a mastery of the play itself. For the mythology free use is made of Latin (and occasionally of Greek) sources of information. The reader should have at hand especially a good edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

The text is that of Leo (Berlin, 1879), the few variations therefrom receiving mention in the notes. The various readings of the manuscripts and the conjectures and emendations of editors have been omitted from this preliminary edition.

Most of the abbreviations used in the introduction and notes are self-explanatory, but the following may be less clear to the student:

Agam.: Agamemnon (Seneca).	Med.: Medea (Euripides, Seneca).
Ann.: Annales (Tacitus).	N. D.: de Natura Deorum
Dial.: Dialogus de Oratoribus	(Cicero).
(Tacitus).	N. H.: Naturalis Historia
Epist.: Epistulae (Horace, Pliny).	(Pliny).
Ger.: Germania (Tacitus).	Oct.: Octavia (Seneca).
H. C.: Horati Carmina.	Oed.: Oedipus (Seneca).
H. Epd.: Horati Epodi.	O, M.: Ovidi Metamorphoses.
H. S.: Horati Saturae.	O, R. A.: Ovidi Remedium Amoris.
Her.: Heroides (Ovid).	Phaed.: Phaedra (Seneca).
Herc. Fur.: Hercules Furens	S. or Sat.: Saturae (Horace,
(Seneca).	Juvenal).
Herc. Oct.: Hercules Oetaeus	Theb.: Thebais (Statius).
(Seneca).	Thy.: Thyestes (Seneca).
I. O.: Institutio Oratoria (Quintilian).	Tro.: Troades (Seneca).
	V. A.: Vergili Aeneis.
	V. E.: Vergili Eclogae.

INTRODUCTION

ROMAN TRAGEDY FROM LIVIUS TO ACCIUS

For five centuries Rome had no literature, but about B. C. 240 Livius Andronicus, who had been a slave and now was a schoolmaster, being in want of a good Latin text book, translated the *Odyssey* of Homer into rude Saturnian verse. Finding this first essay successful he widened the scope of his adventure, and brought over some comedies and later some tragedies from the Greek. His success as tested by the popularity of his work was unquestioned, and, though little can be said for the originality or literary merit of his productions, it is from this beginning that the history of Roman literature dates.

The example thus set was not long in being followed. A host of translators and adapters sprang up, treading for the most part the comparatively narrow path marked out by the pioneer. Practice, under the spur of emulation, produced a gradual improvement in form and finish, and soon one and another ventured to introduce new features. Instead of translation, bald or free, came the interpolation of incidents and dialogue not in the original, the welding together of two plots (*contaminatio*) and the introduction of bits of local coloring which served to render the scenes more intelligible to the untraveled Roman. Especially was this

true of the Comedy, as is seen in the plays, still extant, of Plautus and Terence.

In tragedy the earliest names after Livius are those of Nævius, Ennius and Pacuvius, all of whom were living within a quarter-century after the enterprising schoolman had made his debut. All borrowed freely from the Greek, as he had done. Presently, however, the Roman's national pride suggested an attempt at a national drama, and the result is seen in the *fabulae praetextae* of Nævius and his successors. In these, while the form of the Greek play was retained, both plot and characters were purely Roman. Such titles are met as the *Romulus* of Nævius, the *Puullus* of Pacuvius and the *Brutus* and *Aeneadae* of Accius.

Unfortunately we have of these earliest products of the Roman tragic muse nothing more than a list of titles and a few of the merest fragments—too little data for the formation of any independent judgment of their merits. For this we must rely on the authority of ancient critics who had access to the plays in their entirety. Cicero constantly professed a great admiration for Ennius, though rather as an epic than as a tragic poet. Varro is quoted as having declared Pacuvius a model of richness in diction. To Pacuvius and Accius Quintilian ascribes the first place among ancient tragic writers in vigor of thought and expression and in the dignity of the characters they created. The popularity enjoyed in the Augustan age by these old authors provoked the sarcastic protest of Horace (see especially *Epist.* 2, 1, 18-75). Roman critics generally admitted the courage and vigor of these pioneers in literature, while at the

same time they deplored the rudeness of their style; but this, Quintilian observes, was due less to themselves than to their time.

DECLINE OF THE TRAGEDY AT ROME

The interest in tragedy was soon overshadowed by the growing popularity of the comedy, which appealed more powerfully to the Roman taste; and, while the comedies of Plautus and Terence were still popular in the time of Augustus, the custom of presenting tragedies on the stage very soon died out. A natural consequence was the diversion of literary effort into other channels, and in the half-century following the death of Accius there was but one tragic writer of any note—L. Julius Cæsar Strabo. After Accius, indeed, it is probable that works of this sort were composed rather as literary experiments, and for private reading or at most for declamation, than for exhibition on the stage. Many of the later poets tried their skill in this species of composition—among them Q. Cicero, Varro, Varius, Asinius Pollio, Ovid, Pomponius Secundus and Seneca—some with considerable success, if we accept the judgment of Quintilian (*I. O.* 10, 1, 98). In all we find mention made of thirty-six Roman poets who tried their hands at tragedy, and the number of their works mounts up to about one hundred and fifty.

THE SENECA TRAGEDIES

Of all this mass of tragic literature we have to-day, aside from inconsiderable fragments, only the plays which bear the name of Seneca. Nine of the ten are adaptations from the Greek, while one

is a *praetexta*. Fortunately most of the Greek originals are extant, so that comparison with them is possible—an advantage we do not enjoy in studying the Latin comedy. Thus we find that the *Agamemnon* was borrowed from Aeschylus, the *Oedipus* from Sophocles, and no less than five of the others—the *Medea*, the *Hippolytus* or *Phaedra*, the *Hercules Furens*, the *Troades* or *Hecuba* and the *Phoenissae*—from Euripides. It is worthy of note that from the first it was not the solemn, stately idealism of Aeschylus and Sophocles but the human realism of Euripides that most attracted the Romans. From the time of Ennius down it was Euripides who was copied oftenest.

In most cases the Senecan characters bear the same names as in the Greek originals, and in essential features are the same; though they differ in points of detail and often are inferior in distinctness of conception and consistency of development. In plot the Roman author has not ventured to vary far from his models, though here and there he has altered the arrangement as well as the allotment of space to the several scenes. The *Hercules Furens* opens with a scene (not in Euripides) in which Juno foreshadows the catastrophe, and the *Troades* is a contamination of Euripides' *Hecuba* and his *Troades*. As a rule the Latin plays are considerably shorter than their Greek prototypes. New characters are not introduced, but frequently one or another is omitted.

The chorus is retained as in the Greek, although (since the orchestral pit was occupied in the Roman theater by seats for the senators) there was no space provided for the choral dance. In

early times the chorus may have had a place on the stage, and its retention in tragic composition after public representation ceased was due probably to tradition and to the opportunity thus afforded for experiment in lyric passages. Horace's precept, *Actoris partes chorus . . . defendat*, can hardly be said to have been observed in these plays. There is little of that direct participation in the development of the plot which is assigned the chorus by the Greeks and especially by Aeschylus. Its part here is more formal and artificial—rather a set passage on some lyric theme suggested more or less remotely by the context than an integral part of the whole. In this as in the handling of characters our author carries to an extreme an innovation of Euripides.

The *Octavia* is constructed on the same general plan as the other nine tragedies, having its dialogue and its choruses, but differing, of course, in plot and scene, and presenting also some peculiarities of versification. Scholars are pretty generally agreed now that it is later than the age of Nero, though its author evidently was a close student of Seneca's thought and style.

While the Senecan tragedies are not arranged in trilogies, there are some pairs in which both plays contain the same principal characters. These are (1) the *Oedipus* and the *Phoenissae* or *Thebais*, in which the downfall and exile of the hapless Theban king are portrayed; (2) the *Thyestes* and the *Agamemnon*, whose theme is the house of Pelops and its dark destiny; and (3) the two plays in which the hero Hercules overshadows all other characters—the *Hercules Furens* and the *Hercules*

Oetaeus. The remaining plays are unconnected—the *Hippolytus* or *Phaedra*, whose double title suggests its plot; the *Troades* or *Hecuba*, dealing with the fortunes of the royal house after the fall of Troy; and the *Medea*.

THE MEDEA

This play is regarded as one of the best of the group. Title, plot and characters are taken from Euripides. In both authors the scene is Corinth and the time that of the heroine's repudiation and revenge. In both are scenes in which she protests to King Creon against the injustice of her banishment and gains from him the respite of a single day; in which she seeks a final interview with Jason, upbraids him with his faithlessness and listens with scorn to his excuses; and in which, having slain her two sons, she is borne away through the air. In both she endeavors at first to recall her recreant husband to his duty, and, failing in that, dissembles her wrath but begins at once to plan her revenge.

Along with these points of resemblance are many minor differences. Of the *dramatis personae* Seneca omits entirely the *paedagogos* and Aegeus, king of Athens, and makes the two boys, who in the Greek play cry out behind the scenes when attacked by their mother, purely mute characters. The messenger who reports the catastrophe at the palace also has a less important part, speaking but ten lines in Seneca as against 103 in Euripides. Medea's long address to the chorus, setting forth her woes and her vengeful design, and the promise of silence on the part of the chorus (EUR. 216-

272), are omitted from the Latin play. So, of course, is the interview with Aegeus (EUR. 661-761). Other omissions of less extent occur, and in their stead is inserted the scene (SEN. 670-848) in which Medea's incantations are recorded at length. The introduction of the *hymenaeus* as one of the choruses is an innovation of the Latin author. In matters of detail we find still further variations. Thus in Euripides Medea is commanded (v. 275) to take her children with her into exile, and with pretended earnestness entreats her husband to obtain a revocation of the edict (vv. 935-939); while in Seneca it is she who desires them to go with her, and her husband who insists that they remain. In the Greek she is determined to destroy her husband as well as her rival (vv. 364-376), but does not form the design until later (vv. 787 ff.) of striking at him through their sons; though in the very first scene the nurse is represented as fearful of danger to the children from the mother's frenzy. Neither of these ideas appears in the Latin. In the older play Jason is told of the intended gift to his bride, while in the newer he knows nothing of it until it has done its deadly work. In both versions the heroine is by far the strongest character, but she overshadows the rest more completely in the Latin. Jason in the one play (EUR. 593-597) affirms that his purpose in wedding the Corinthian princess is to gain means of protection and support for Medea and her children; in the other (SEN. 434-436, 518-530) he frankly confesses that fear is his motive. In the one case he is a smooth-tongued egoist, in the other a self-confess-

ed coward. In both (EUR. 476-487; SEN. 449-489) she reminds him of all she has done and sacrificed in his behalf, and paints his ingratitude in vivid colors. The passages are very similar in substance, though the Greek is a straightforward narrative and the Latin more declamatory. Jason's reply is reported differently. According to Euripides he proceeds to prove by argument (vv. 534-541) that her service to him had not been so great after all, and that in fact she had gained more than she had lost in following him; while in the Latin (vv. 490, 491) he tries to evade her claims by setting up the pitiful counter-plea that by his tears he had persuaded Creon to grant her exile instead of death. Her reply is scathing in its irony: *Poenam putabam; munus ut video est fuga* (v. 492). Euripides makes them meet a second time, Seneca but once.

The existence of such differences has prompted the suggestion that probably Seneca did not imitate Euripides directly, but rather some later (perhaps Alexandrian) version of the play. Of course the myth of Medea was common property. Before Euripides there had been the *Medea* of Neophron, and as many as five other Greek tragedies of the same title are catalogued. Among the Romans too it was a favorite theme. Ennius had used it; so probably had Mæcenas; and Ovid's *Medea* won high praise from Quintilian and Tacitus (*Dial.* 12). It is probable, therefore, that our author had access to several Latin versions of the *Medea*, as well as to more than one in Greek. Nor is it unlikely that his conception and treatment of it were affected by Ovid's. There is a striking parallel between the

two authors in methods and results. Each wrote much and easily, and each appears to have cared mainly for effectiveness of form and to have been willing, if need were, to attain this at the sacrifice of substance. While we have not Ovid's tragedy, we have his epistle of Medea to Jason (*Her.* 12), from which we may infer something of his conception of the heroine. Now the resemblance between the Medea of this epistle and the Medea of Seneca's tragedy is too close to be mere coincidence, and moreover there are many expressions essentially and some literally the same. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Neronian author was influenced to considerable degree by the Augustan, and that some of the variations from Euripides may be accounted for in this way.

In modern times the tragedy of Medea has appeared in Italian and French, and even in German and English versions.

THE STAGE SETTING

Permanent theaters were long unknown at Rome. Of those that were finally built the general plan was the same. At one side of the building was the stage, very long and narrow, with a permanent background representing the street front of one or more houses which could stand for whatever scene the particular play required. Immediately before the stage and somewhat lower was a large space exactly semicircular, filled with seats for the magistrates and those of senatorial rank; and beyond these rose the *cavea*, or general seating, in semicircular tiers. The *cavea* would often accommodate many thousands of spectators.

There was no roof, though sometimes an awning was stretched overhead to keep off the heat of the sun.

For the *Medea*—supposing, what appears very unlikely, that it ever was put on the stage—the background would represent the palace of King Creon and the home of Medea side by side. Creon's entrance and exit would be through the door of his palace, Medea's through the door of her own house; and her final appearance would be on its flat roof. The incantations detailed in the fourth act would be performed on the stage before her house. The chorus may be thought of as present throughout the play.

Two elements were recognized in the text of the play—the *diverbium* or dialogue proper, and the *canticum* or part that was chanted to musical accompaniment. In the *Medea* the first chorus may be supposed to have been divided between two bands of singers, who chanted their parts responsively; and all the choruses, as well as the impassioned scenes in the fourth act, may be classed as *cantica*.

THE METRES OF THE MEDEA

Seneca forms the iambic senarius with great regularity. In the *Medea* the rules are followed with especial strictness. For the characteristic iambus (—) the equivalent tribrach (— — —) may be substituted, except in the last foot. Here not infrequently a pyrrhic (— —) occurs, the final syllable being *anceps*. The substitution of a spondee (— —) or either of its equivalents, the dactyl (— — —) or the anapest (— — —), is common in the odd-numbered feet (first, third and

fifth), but does not occur in the sixth as it might do according to Horace's statement (*A. P.* 255-257). The scheme of the senarius, with the variations met in the *Medea*, is as follows (figures denoting the verse in which each foot is met first):

1	2	3	4	5	6
— 8	— 1	— 122	— 5	— 512	— 1
— — 53	— — 10	— — 13	— — 1		
— — 1		— — 1		— — 1	
— — 6	— — 488	— — 897		— — 11	
— — 29		— — 15		— — 266	
					— — 2

The fifth foot is almost invariably a spondee or an anapest. *Vv.* 488 and 670 can be treated as beginning with a proceleusmatic, and some scholars have declared that the anapest never occurs in the second place.

In the lyric passages are met a variety of metres. The first chorus (*vv.* 56-115), though but sixty lines in length, changes measure three times. First is a passage of nineteen lines in the minor asclepiad (as in *H. C.* 1, 1, etc.), then eighteen glyconics, then seventeen more asclepiads, and finally six dactylic hexameters. These measures do not differ in structure from the same as written by Horace.

It is in the second chorus (*vv.* 301-379) that we meet Seneca's favorite choral measure, the anapestic dimeter. The standard foot may give way to a spondee or (except in the fourth place) to a dactyl. The single lines are not regarded as independent, but as parts of a continuous whole. The

final syllable of each verse must always be long (not so, however, in the *Octavia*); and, contrary to the usual rule in Latin poetry, a final consonant in one line makes position with an initial consonant in the next. Hiatus between successive verses, which the Greeks never allowed in this measure, is admitted by Seneca. In this play there are five instances (following vv. 342, 348, 827, 828, 832). One of these is a hemistich (half-verse), and in two instances the hiatus is at the end of a sentence. Seneca does not use the paroemiac, with which the Greeks regularly concluded an anapestic passage.

The longest chorus proper is at the end of the third act (vv. 579-669), and is a form of the sapphic strophe. A break occurs at v. 660, where the measure can be restored by supplying one hemistich, though the sense may require an additional stanza. Taking the chorus as it stands in Leo's text (supplying, of course, the half-line in v. 660), we count fourteen stanzas or strophes, seven of four lines each, as in Horace, and seven of nine lines each, the last of each strophe being an adonic. In v. 636 the arsis of the second foot is resolved, bringing two dactyls in succession. The caesura, always masculine, occurs regularly in the third foot.

The brief chorus which closes the fourth act (vv. 849-878) is composed of twenty-seven anacronics (iambic dimeter catalectic) and three verses one syllable less (iambic dimeter brachycatalectic). It is rigid in its construction, the only variation from the iambus being the use of a spondee, and in four cases an anapest, in the first foot. The final syllable with two exceptions (vv. 852, 861—each at the end of a sentence) is long, either by

nature or by position (often on account of an initial consonant in the following line).

The frenzied speech of Medea in *vv.* 740-848, while not nominally a chorus, presents all the characteristics of one, metrically and sentimentally. Verses 740-751 are in the trochaic tetrameter catalectic. Then follow nineteen lines (752-770) in the iambic trimeter, then sixteen iambs in which trimeter and dimeter alternate (771-787), and finally fifty-six lines in the anapestic dimeter, but with three monometers (811, 816, 832) interspersed. The last six verses of the speech are a reversion to the ordinary dramatic form.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE SENECA TRAGEDIES

While all the manuscripts ascribe these plays to 'Seneca,' several circumstances afford opportunity for the creation of a 'Senecan question' which critics have not been slow to embrace. The several theories advanced are (1) that the plays are the work of the well-known philosopher; (2) that some are his and the remainder from another hand—or hands; (3) that all are the result of collaboration by Marcus and Lucius Seneca, the latter's brother Mela and the poet Lucan; and (4) that all are the work of an entirely different person, whose real or assumed name was Seneca.

It is impossible here to discuss these theories at length. The opinion now prevails that the *Octavia* certainly is not Seneca's, and that the other tragedies, with the possible exception of the *Agamemnon* and the *Hercules Oetaeus*, are his. Of external evidence in support of this conclusion we have the mention of Seneca as a poet by Quintilian, Pliny

and Tacitus, the citation of the *Medea* as his by Quintilian (see v. 453 n.), the ascription of four other tragedies in this collection to him by well-known writers in the early centuries of our era (*Oedipus*, *Phaedra*, *Thyestes* and *Troades*), and the negative fact that we have no proof of the existence of a separate Seneca *tragicus*. Of internal evidence there is the occasional allusion to contemporary events in which Seneca was deeply concerned; the close parallel in philosophical principles and general tone of thought between the tragedies and the prose works which are indisputably his; and the identity of literary style in the tragedies and prose works.

The case of the *Octavia* is different. Its omission from the oldest manuscript, the fact that the philosopher himself is one of the *dramatis personae*, the remarkable forecasting of the fate (vv. 629-631) which befell Nero three years after Seneca's death, and certain peculiarities of style and metre, all have been cited as going to prove a later origin; and while none of these arguments is conclusive in itself, their cumulative force is considerable. Various dates have been assigned for its composition, as early as Domitian's reign and as late as Hadrian's or later, but no definite conclusion can be reached. Historically the *Octavia* agrees almost perfectly with Tacitus. It is of especial interest to us as the one example extant of the *fabula praetexta*.

In regard to word-forms and syntax the Latin of Seneca is essentially that of the Golden Age. In his prose he uses constructions which earlier were admissible only in poetry, and gives

this word and that a somewhat different shade of meaning, but in the main the mastery of Cicero, Vergil and Ovid gives one the key to Seneca's grammar. It was in his rhetoric that he created a new school. Ovid had made a beginning, but Seneca went much further. Form became the essential thing. An affectation of brevity, a straining after antithesis and epigram, came to be the characteristics of his work and that of his imitators (see Quintilian's judgment, *I. O.* 10, 1, 129). In spite, however, of undeniable faults of style, there is much that is good and more that is pleasing, and no study of the literature of Rome can afford to leave Seneca out of account.

THE WORKS OF SENECA

As was remarked by Quintilian (*I. O.* 10, 1, 129), Seneca was a very prolific and versatile writer, working in almost every department of literature. Of the prose works there are twelve books of '*dialogi*,' in which ethical themes are discussed, mainly from the Stoic point of view; two books *de Clementia* and seven *de Beneficiis*; an extensive compilation entitled *Naturales Quaestiones*, discussing various natural phenomena; and 124 'epistles,' really moral essays, addressed to Lucilius. There is also a collection of short letters, indorsed as authentic by St. Jerome, but now regarded as counterfeit, which purport to have passed between Seneca and the apostle Paul (eight written by Seneca, six by Paul).

Altogether the prose writings of Seneca, counting only those which are admitted to be genuine, cover more than a thousand closely printed pages

in the Teubner text edition. From fragments, moreover, and citations in later writers, we know that he wrote extensively in the fields of science, philosophy and history, in addition to the works which have been preserved. Mention has been made also of letters addressed to Novatus, and it is well known that he composed many speeches and state papers for Nero. His literary activity, therefore, must have been very considerable.

The *Apocolocyntosis*, partly in prose, partly in verse, is the only example known to be extant of the *Satura Menippea*. Its theme is the search of the lately deceased emperor Claudius for his proper place in the other world, and while it displays a good deal of ingenuity and talent of a certain order, its flippancy and irreverence make it distasteful to the modern reader.

The purely poetical works ascribed to Seneca are the nine epigrams and the ten tragedies already discussed. All display skill in the use of metrical forms, without, however, a high endowment of poetic genius.

MEDEA

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MEDEA
NVTRIX
CREO

IASON
NVNTIVS
CHORVS

SCAENA CORINTHI

ACT I

[*A street in Corinth. In the background are the palace of King Creon and the home of Jason and Medea. From the latter enters Medea, furious at Jason for his desertion of her and his marriage to the Princess Creusa (Glauce), which is set for that day.*]

MED. Di coniugales tuque genialis tori,
Lucina, custos quaeque domituram freta
Tiphyn novam frenare docuisti ratem,
et tu, profundi saeve dominator maris,
clarumque Titan dividens orbi diem, 5
tacitisque praebens conscium sacris iubar

2. **Lucina**: the bringer-to-light—an epithet often applied to Diana and also to Juno. **quaeque...docuisti**: Pallas (Minerva). It was under her direction that the materials were chosen and the Argo built (cf. vv. 365-367). 3. **Tiphyn**: the Argo's pilot. For his fate see vv. 616-624. **novam**: The Argo was thought of as the first Grecian vessel to attempt a long sea voyage. 4. **profundi dominator maris**: Neptune (cf. *dominus profundis*, v. 597). 5. **Titan**: Helios, the sun-god. In v. 410 Enceladus is thus designated. **orbi**: sc. *terrarum*. **Orbi** is indirect object of *dividens* (cf. *feminis...carmina divides*, H. C. 1, 15, 14). 6. **Taci-**

Hecate triformis, quosque iuravit mihi
 deos Iason, quosque Medae magis
 fas est precari: noctis aeternae chaos,
 aversa superis regna manesque impios 10
 dominumque regni tristis et dominam fide
 meliore raptam, voce non fausta precor.
 nunc, nunc adeste, sceleris ultrices deae,
 crinem solutis squalidae serpentibus,
 atram cruentis manibus amplexae facem; 15
 adeste, thalamis horridae quondam meis
 quales stetit: coniugi letum novae
 letumque socero et regiae stirpi date.
 mihi peius aliquid, quod precer sponso, manet:
 vivat. per urbes erret ignotas egens 20
 exul pavens invisus incerti laris,
 iam notus hospes limen alienum expetat,
 me coniugem optet quoque non aliud queam
 peius precari, liberos similes patri
 similesque matri—parta iam, partita ultio est: 25

tis sacris: the silent mysteries of night. 7. *Hecate triformis*: cf. *frontis non una*, v. 751; *triceps Hecate*, O. M. 7, 194; *diva triformis*, H. C. 8, 22, 4. This goddess was thought of as having functions in heaven, on earth and in the infernal world. She was identified or confused, therefore, with Selene or Phoebe (Luna), with Artemis (Diana), and with Persephone (Proserpina). 10. *Manesque impios*: ghosts of the wicked dead, who are invoked along with their rulers, Pluto and Proserpina. 11. *dominum*: Pluto. *dominam...raptam*: Proserpina, who had been carried off by Pluto and made his bride (O. M. 5, 359-424), but not deserted later as Medea had been; hence the phrase 'with better faith' *voce non fausta*: because invocation of the powers of darkness was *nefas*. 13. *adeste*: 'Be present to aid'—a common form of invocation (cf. *ades*, v. 703). *deae*: the Furies (Alecto, Megaera and Tisiphone), whose duty it was to torment men for their evil deeds. For their characteristics cf. vv. 959-961. 17. *coniugi...novae*: the princess Glaucé or Creusa, whom Jason was about to marry. 18. *socero*: king Creon. *regiae stirpi*: the whole royal house of Corinth. 19. *mihi peius aliquid*: Having called down destruction upon her rival's family, she now prays that a fate still worse may befall her faithless husband (cf. with vv. 20-25 Dido's curse on Aeneas, V. A. 4, 612-620). 22. *hospes*: a stranger or guest, i. e. homeless. 24. *similes...matri*: like their father (in faith-

peperī. querelas verbaque in cassum sero?
 non ibo in hostes? manibus excutiam faces
 caeloque lucem—spectat hoc nostri sator
 sol generis, et spectatur, et cūrru insidens
 per solita puri spatia decurrit poli? 30
 non redit in ortus et remetitur diem?
 da, da per auras curribus patriis vehi,
 committe habenas, genitor, et flagrantibus
 ignifera loris tribue moderari iuga:
 gemino Corinthos litore opponens moras 35
 cremata flammis maria committat duo.
 hoc restat unum, pronubam thalamo feram
 ut ipsa pinum postque sacrificas preces
 caedam dicatis victimas altaribus.
 per viscera ipsa quaere supplicio viam, 40
 si vivis, anime, si quid antiqui tibi
 remanet vigoris; pelle femineos metus
 et inhospitalem Caucasum mente indue.

lessness), like their mother (in wickedness and desolation). 26. *peperi*: Had Medea already some idea of the means by which she finally punished her faithless husband (cf. *vv.* 549, 550)? *querelas...sero*: It is time for action, not for words. 27. *manibus*: dat.—from their hands. *faces*: carried in the marriage procession. 28. *caelo*: same construction as *manibus*. Medea was credited (O.M. 7, 207-209) with having power to darken the heavens. *spectat...poli*: 'Does he see this, and does he still show his face and pass on in his wonted course?' The allusion is to the sun's having hidden his face and retraced his course in horror at sight of the feast of Thyestes. *nostri sator generis*: Phoebus, who was the father of Aetes and hence grandfather of Medea. 35. *Corinthos*: nom. *gemino...litore*: abl. quality. Cf. *bimaris Corinthi*, H. C. 1, 7, 2. *opponens moras*: by compelling vessels to sail around the Peloponnesus (cf. *flectens moras*, *v.* 149). Many attempts were made in ancient times to pierce the Isthmus, but it was not until our own day (1894) that a canal was completed. It follows the line surveyed in 67 A. D. for Nero, who himself broke ground for it (Suetonius, Nero 19). 36. *cremata*: nom., agreeing with *Corinthos*. *flammis...duo*: unite the two seas with flame. 37. *pronubam...pinum*: a torch (cf. *faces*, *v.* 27) borne by a young matron in the marriage procession. *Pronubam* here is adjective. 40. *per viscera ipsa*: the entrails of the victims on the altar—a common method of divination. 43. *Caucasum*:

quodcumque vidit Pontus aut Phasis nefas,
 videbit Isthmos. efferā, ignota, horrida, 45
 tremenda caelo pariter ac terris mala
 mens intus agitat: vulnera et caedem et vagum
 funus per artus—levia memoravi nimis:
 haec virgo feci; gravior exurgat dolor:
 maiora iam me scelera post partus decent. 50
 accingere ira teque in exitium para
 furore toto. paria narrentur tua
 repudia thalamis: quo virum linques modo?
 hoc quo secuta es. rumpe iam segnes moras:
 quae scelere parta est, scelere linquenda est do-
 mus. 55

CHORVS

Ad regum thalamos numine prospero
 qui caelum superi quique regunt fretum
 adsint cum populis rite faventibus.
 primum sceptriferis colla Tonantibus
 taurus celsa ferat tergore candido; 60
 Lucinam nivei femina corporis
 intemptata iugo placet, et asperi
 Martis sanguineas quae cohibet manus,

i. e., the coldness and hardness of the Caucasus. 45. *efferā, ignota*, etc.: neuter. 44. Scan as follows: *funus* | *per ar* | *tus levi* | *a memo* | *ravi* | *nimis*. The third foot is a dactyl, the fourth a tribrach. 49. *haec feci*: 'All this I did as a girl' (cf. v. 909). *exurgat*: *exurgat*. 51. *accingere*: middle voice—'Gird yourself.' 52. *paria...thalamis*: Her marriage with Jason had involved the betrayal of her father and the murder of her brother. She now proposes to celebrate her repudiation with crimes as dreadful. 54. *hoc*: sc. *modo*. 59. *Tonans*: the proper epithet of Jupiter, here extended to his sister-wife as well. 61. *femina*: sc. *bos*. *nivei...corporis*: gen. quality, which here does not differ in force from the ablative in *tergore candido* above. To *di superi* were offered white victims (black to *di inferi*), which had never been used as beasts of burden (hence *intemptata iugo*, v. 62). 62. *placet*: from *placere*, not *placere*. 63. *quae retinet*: Either Pax, the goddess of peace, or Pallas, representing scientific warfare as contrasted with Ares,

quae dat belligeris foedera gentibus
et cornu retinet divite copiam, 65
donetur tenera mitior hostia.
et tu, qui facibus legitimis ades,
noctem discutiens auspice dextera
huc incede gradu marcidus ebrio,
praecingens roseo tempora vinculo. 70
et tu quae, gemini praevia temporis,
tarde. stella, redis semper amantibus:
te matres, avide te cupiunt nurus
quam primum radios spargere lucidos.

Vincit virgineus decor 75
longe Cecropias nurus
et quas Taygeti iugis
exercet iuvenum modo
muris quod caret oppidum,
et quas Aonius latex 80
Alpheosque sacer lavat.
si forma velit aspici,
cedent Aesonio duci
proles fulminis improbi
aptat qui iuga tigribus, 85
nec non, qui tripodas movet,

the god of brute force (cf. Il. 5, 840; 21, 406; H. C. 3, 4, 53 ff.). 67. **tu qui...ades**: Hymen (cf. v. 110). **facibus legitimis**: dat. Hymen was invoked in song at all Greek weddings (see v. 116 n.) 71. **tu quae...redis**: Hesperus, the evening star. Cf. *Vesper...expectata diu vix tandem lumina tollit* (Catullus 62, 2). **gemini praevia temporis**: forerunner of the twilight (cf. *dux noctis*, v. 878). 76. **Cecropias nurus**: daughters of Cecrops, i. e., Athenian maidens. 79. **muris quod caret oppidum**: Sparta. 80. **Aonius**: Boeotian or Theban. 81. **Alpheos**: An Arcadian stream. The bride is said to outshine the maids of all these regions. 82. **forma**: abl. 83. **Aesonio duci**: Jason. 84. **proles fulminis improbi**: Bacchus, referring to the manner in which Jupiter visited Semele (O. M. 3, 253-315). 86. **qui tripodas movet**: Phoebus Apollo, who inspired the Delphic and other oracles

frater virginis asperae.
 cedit Castore cum suo
 Pollux caestibus aptior.
 sic, sic, caelicolae, precor, 90
 vincat femina coniuges,
 vir longe superet viros.

Haec cum femineo constitit in choro,
 unius facies praenitet omnibus.
 sic cum sole perit sidereus decor, 95
 et densi latitant Pleiadum greges
 cum Phoebe solidum lumine non suo
 orbem circuitis cornibus alligat.

*

*

ostro sic niveus puniceo color
 perfusus rubuit, sic nitidum iubar 100
 pastor luce nova roscidus aspicit.
 ereptus thalamis Phasidis horridi,
 effrenae solitus pectora coniugis
 invita trepidus prendere dextera,
 felix Aeoliam corripe virginem 105
 nunc primum soceris, sponse, volentibus.
 concesso, iuvenes, ludite iurgio,

(cf. vv. 785, 786). 87. *virginis asperae*: Diana. 89. *Pollux caestibus aptior*: cf. Il. 3, 237; H. S. 2, 1, 26. 91, 92. *vincat superet*: surpass, excel. 93. *haec*: the bride. *constitit*: 'has taken her place.' 95. *cum sole*: 'with (at) the coming of the sun.' 97. *Phoebe*: the moon. *non suo*: reflected. 98. The sense appears to be incomplete here, and Leo suggests two lines to restore the probable connection, as follows: *talem dum iuvenis conspicit, en rubor | perfudit subito purpureus genas*. 101. *luce nova*: at dawn. *roscidus*: moist with dew after his night watch. 102. *Phasidis horridi*: gen. The river's name represents here the country itself. *Ereptus, solitus* and *trepidus*, like *felix*, modify *tu*, the implied subject of *corripe* (v. 105). 105. *Aeoliam virginem*: Jason's bride, Creusa, was a descendant of Aeolus, the son of Hellen—not Aeolus the ruler of the winds. 106. Medea's father had opposed her passion for Jason. This time the intended father-in-law is willing. 107. *iurgio*: cf. *fescenninus*, v. 113.

hinc illinc, iuvenes. mittite carmina:
rara est in dominos iusta licentia.

Candida thyrsigeri proles generosa Lyaei, 110
multifidam iam tempus erat succendere pinum:
excute sollemnem digitis marcentibus ignem.
festa dicax fundat convicia fescenninus,
solvat turba iocos—tacitis eat illa tenebris,
si qua peregrino nubit fugitiva marito. 115

108. *hinc illinc...mittite carmina*: sing responsively, as in Catullus 62. 109. 'Rarely is such license allowed us against our betters.' 110. 'Fair and noble scion of Bacchus.' Hymen, the god of marriage, is said to have been the son of Bacchus and Venus (wine and love), though other accounts are given (see Cl. Dict., art. *Hymen*). 111. *multifidam...pinum*: cf. *multifidas faces*, O. M. 7, 259. 113. *dicax...fescenninus*: cf. *procax fescenninus*, Catullus 61, 126. The 'fescennine verses,' containing rude banter (*iurgio*, v. 107) and coarse jokes, were used in very early times by the rustics of central Italy on various occasions of public merry-making, but restricted later to wedding feasts. To make a Corinthian chorus use the word of course involves an anachronism. Verse 113 is spondaic. 114. *illa*: Medea. 115. *si qua*: equivalent to the relative *quae*.

ACT II

MED. Occidimus, aures pepulit hymenaeus
meas.

vix ipsa taptum, vix adhuc credo malum.
hoc facere Iason potuit, erepto patre
patria atque regno sedibus solam exteris
deserere durus? merita contempsit mea 120
qui scelere flammās viderat vinci et mare?
adeone credit omne consumptum nefas?
incerta vaecors mente vaesana feror
partes in omnes; unde me ulcisci queam?
utinam esset illi frater! est coniunx: in hanc 125
ferrum exigatur. hoc meis satis est malis?
si quod Pelasgae, si quod urbes barbarae
novere facinus quod tuae ignorent manus,
nunc est parandum. scelera te hortentur tua
et cuncta redeant: inclitum regni decus 130
raptum et nefandae virginis parvus comes
divisus ense, funus ingestum patri
sparsumque ponto corpus et Peliae senis

116. *hymenaeus*: The chant of the marriage procession (cf. Catullus 61 and 62). 117. *vix adhuc credo*: a very natural touch. 119. *solam*: sc. *me*. 121. *scelere*: a word which Medea does not hesitate to apply to her own acts, e. g. in *vv.* 129, 135, 500, 1016 (cf. *nefas*, *v.* 122). *flammas*: *igneos tauri halitus*, *v.* 466. 122. 'Does he forsooth believe that my every resource of evil is exhausted?' 124. *queam*: subjunctive in impassioned question. 125. *est coniunx*: sc. *illi*. *in hanc ferrum exigatur*: 'Into her let the sword be plunged.' For the construction cf. Seneca, *Consolatio ad Marciam* 16, 3: *Tela quae (Fortuna) in Scipiones...exegit*; also *ferrum exigam*, *v.* 1006. 131. *parvus comes*: her brother, Absyrtus (cf. *v.* 473 n.). 133. *Peliae senis*: Jason's uncle, who had deprived him of his throne and sent him in search

decocta aeno membra: funestum impie
quam saepe fudi sanguinem, et nullum scelus 135
irata feci: movit infelix amor.

Quid tamen Iason potuit, alieni arbitri
iurisque factus? debuit ferro obvium
offerre pectus—melius, a melius, dolor
furiose, loquere. si potest, vivat meus, 140
ut fuit, Iason; si minus, vivat tamen
memorque nostri muneri parcat meo.
culpa est Creontis tota, qui sceptro impotens
coniugia solvit quique genetricem abstrahit
natis et arto pignore astrictam fidem 145
dirimit: petatur, solus hic poenas luat
quas debet. alto cinere cumulabo domum;
videbit atrum verticem flammis agi
Malea longas navibus flectens moras.
NVTR. Sile, obsecro, questusque secreto
abditos 150
manda dolori. gravia quisquis vulnera
patiente et aequo mutus animo pertulit,
referre potuit: ira quae tegitur nocet;

of the golden fleece. Medea on reaching Iolcos had shown her power in restoring to youth her husband's aged father (O. M. 7, 162-293), and the daughters of Pelias desired the same boon for their sire. Medea assented, but when on her advice they had cut his body into bits and placed them in a caldron (*aeno*, v. 666), she refused to do her part. It was in their flight from the vengeance of Pelias' son Acastus that she and Jason came to Corinth. *sparsum ponto*: see v. 473. 135. *nullum scelus irata feci*: Not anger but love had prompted all her crimes. 136. *movit*: sc. *scelera* or *me*. 137. By a sudden turn of thought she is led to seek excuses for her lover. *alieni...factus*: brought under another's direction and control (cf. *sui iuris*). *arbitri*: gen. of *arbitrium*. 142. *nostri...meo*: This confusion of number in the pronoun of the first person is quite common, especially in colloquial Latin. *muneri...meo*: my gift his life. 144. *genetricem natis*: In Euripides (Med. 275) Medea is ordered to take her children with her into banishment. Seneca (cf. vv. 284, 541-546) represents her as desiring to do so but forbidden by Jason. 146. *petatur*: sc. *Creo*. 149. *Malea*: a promontory at the southeastern extremity of the Peloponnesus. *flectens moras*: cf. *opponens moras*, v. 35. 153. *referre*: repay, take vengeance.

professa perdunt odia vindictae locum.

MED. Levis est dolor qui capere consilium
potest 155

et clepere sese: magna non latitant mala.

libet ire contra. NVTR. Siste furialem impetum,
alumna: vix te tacita defendit quies.

MED. Fortuna fortes metuit, ignavos premit.

NVTR. Tunc est probanda, si locum virtus
habet. 160

MED. Numquam potest non esse virtuti locus.

NVTR. Spes nulla rebus monstrat afflictis viam.

MED. Qui nil potest sperare, desperet nihil.

NVTR. Abiere Colchi, coniugis nulla est fides
nihilque superest opibus e tantis tibi. 165

MED. Medea superest, hic mare et terras vides
ferrumque et ignes et deos et fulmina.

NVTR. Rex est timendus. MED. Rex meus
fuerat pater.

NVTR. Non metuis arma? MED. Sint licet terra
edita.

NVTR. Moriere. MED. Cupio. NVTR. Pro-
fuge. MED. Paenituit fugae. 170

NVTR. Medea—MED. Fiam. NVTR. Mater es.
MED. Cui sim vides.

NVTR. Profugere dubitas? MED. Fugiam, at
ulciscar prius.

NVTR. Vindex sequetur. MED. Forsan inveni-
am moras.

159 *Fortuna fortes metuit*: Cf. *fortes fortuna iuvat*, Pliny, Epist. 6, 16, where it is quoted, perhaps, from the *fortes fortuna adiuvat* of Terence (Phormio 203); also *audentes fortuna iuvat* (V. A. 10, 284); and *audentes deus ipse iuvat* (O. M. 10, 58⁴). 166. *hic*: here, in me. 169. *sint...* *edita*: 'No, though they spring from the earth'—alluding to the *terrigenes* (cf. vv. 469, 470), whom Jason had vanquished by her aid. 171. *fiam*: sc. *Medea*—'I shall become Medea.' (cf. *Medea nunc sum*, v. 910). *cui sim vides*: 'You see whose mother I am'—i. e. no one's, since my sons

NVTR. Compesce verba, parce iam. demens, minis
animosque minue: tempori aptari decet. 175

MED. Fortuna opes auferre, non animum potest.
sed cuius ictu regius cardo strepit?
ipse est Pelasgo tumidus imperio Creo.

[*Enter King Creon from his palace. At first he does not see Medea, but soliloquizes.*]

CREO. Medea, Colchi noxium Aeetae genus,
nondum meis exportat e regnis pedem? 180
molitur aliquid: nota fraus, nota est manus.
cui parcet illa quemve securum sinet?
abolere propere pessimam ferro luem
equidem parabam: precibus evicit gener.
concessa vita est, liberet fines metu 185
abeatque tuta. [*Sees Medea.*] fert gradum contra
ferox

minaxque nostros propius affatus petit.
arcete, famuli, tactu et accessu procul,
iubete sileat. regium imperium pati
aliquando discat. vade veloci fuga 190
monstrumque saevum horribile iamdudum avehe?

MED. Quod crimen aut quae culpa multatur fuga?

CR. Quae causa pellat, innocens mulier rogat.

MED. Si iudicas, cognosce. si regnas, iube.

CR. Aequum atque iniquum regis imperium
feras. 195

have been taken away. 177. *cardo strepit*: The door of a Grecian house was suspended not on hinges but on pivots (*cardines*), usually of wood, whose turning in their sockets was far from noiseless. In the comedy the entrance of a character is often heralded by some allusion to the creaking of the pivot. 179. *Aeetae genus*: for *Aeeta nata*, as often. 183, 184. *luem*: Medea. *gener*: Jason. 189. *iubete sileat*: a post-Augustan usage for the more common *iubete eam silere*. 193. Either *innocens* is ironical here, or it is said as a general truth—(only) an innocent woman asks, etc. 194. *si iudicas*: 'If you are acting as judge, hear the case; if as despot, utter your commands.' The reading is

MED. Iniqua numquam regna perpetuo manent.

CR. I, querere Colchis. MED. Redeo: qui
avexit, ferat.

CR. Vox constituto sera decreto venit.

MED. Qui statuit aliquid parte inaudita altera,
aequum licet statuerit, haud aequus fuit. 200

CR. Auditus a te Pelia supplicium tulit?
sed fare, causae detur egregiae locus.

MED. Difficile quam sit animum ab ira flectere
iam concitatum quamque regale hoc putet
sceptris superbas quisquis admovit manus, 205
qua coepit ire, regia didici mea.

quamvis enim sim clade miseranda obruta,
expulsa supplex sola deserta, undique
afflicta, quondam nobili fulsi patre
avoque clarum Sole deduxi genus. 210

quodcumque placidis flexibus Phasis rigat
Pontusque quidquid Scythicus a tergo videt,
palustribus qua maria dulcescunt aquis,
armata peltis quidquid exterret cohors
inclusa ripis vidua Thermodontiis, 215

hoc omne noster genitor imperio regit.
generosa, felix, decore regali potens
fulsi: petebant tunc meos thalamos proci,
qui nunc petuntur. rapida fortuna ac levis

disputed. 197. Colchis: dat. qui avexit: Jason. 199. parte... altera: without hearing the other side. 200. licet: concessive, as in v. 169. 201. Pelia: the Latin form of *Pelias*. For the sense of the line cf. v. 133 n. A case of *argumentum ad hominem*. 202. causae: used in its Roman legal sense of a case on trial (cf. vv. 242, 262). egregiae: ironical. 208. expulsa...deserta: Notice the asyndeton, which is very common in all the tragedies. 210. avo: cf. v. 28 n.; also v. 512. 212. Pontus: *Pontus Euxinus*, the Black Sea. a tergo videt: as one sailed toward the mouth. 213. maria dulcescunt: Pliny (N. H. 4, 24) declares that the Danube (Hister, vv. 585, 763), on account of its swift current, sweetens the waters of the Euxine for forty miles out. Cf. also Polybius 4, 41, 42. 218. fulsi: from *fulgere*. 219. rapida: contains the same root as *eripuit* (v. 220), and

praecepsque regno eripuit, exilio dedit. 220
 confide regnis, cum levis magnas opes
 huc ferat et illuc casus—hoc reges habent
 magnificum et ingens, nulla quod rapiat dies:
 prodesse miseris, supplices fido lare
 protegere. solum hoc Colchico regno extuli, 225
 decus illud ingens Graeciae et florem inclitum,
 praesidia Achivae gentis et prolem deum
 servasse memet. munus est Orpheus meum
 qui saxa cantu mulcet et silvas trahit,
 geminique munus Castor et Pollux meum est 230
 satique Borea quique trans pontum quoque
 summota Lynceus lumine immisso videt,
 omnesque Minyae: nam ducem taceo ducum,
 pro quo nihil debetur: hunc nulli imputo;
 vobis revexi ceteros, unum mihi. 235
 incesse nunc et cuncta flagitiaingere.
 fatebor: obici crimen hoc solum potest,
 Argo reversa. virgini placeat pudor
 paterque placeat: tota cum ducibus ruet
 Pelasga tellus, hic tuus primum gener 240
 tauri ferocis ore flammanti occidet.
 fortuna causam quæ volet nostram premat,
 non paenitet servasse tot regum decus.
 quodcumque culpa praemium ex omni tuli,

suggests the same idea here (cf. *rapax fortuna*, H. C. 1, 34, 14). 220. *eripuit*: so. *me*. 222. *hoc*: *prodesse, protegere*. 225. *solum hoc*: *servasse*; cf. *obici...reversa*, v. 237. 226, 227. *decus, florem, praesidia, prolem*: the Argonauts. 228. *memet*: subject of *servasse*. *Orpheus*: For his fate see v. 625 ff. and note on v. 625. 231. *sati Borea*: Calais and Zetes (cf. *Aquilone natos*, v. 634.) 233. *ducem...ducum*: Jason. 235. *vobis*: for you, i. e., all the Greeks. *unum mihi*: him alone for myself. 237. *crimen hoc solum*: that the Argo has returned. *Argo* is nom. in opposition to *hoc*. 238. The tenses in vv. 238-241 suggest the figure of vision—she is dwelling upon the scene as if it were before her eyes. *placeat*: suppose it had pleased—condition. 240. *gener*: Jason. 244. 'All the reward of all my crimes

hoc est penes te. si placet, damna ream; 245
 sed redde crimen. sum nocens, fateor, Creo:
 talem sciebas esse, cum genua attigi
 fidemque supplex praesidis dextrae peti:
 iterum miseriis angulum ac sedem rogo
 latebrasque viles: urbe si pelli placet, 250
 detur remotus aliquis in regnis locus.
 CR. Non esse me qui sceptrā violentus geram
 nec qui superbo miseras calcem pede,
 testatus equidem videor haud clare parum
 generum exulem legendo et afflictum et gravi 255
 terrore pavidum, quippe quem poenae expetit
 letoque Acastus regna Thessalica optinens.
 senio trementem debili atque aevo gravem
 patrem peremptum queritur et caesi senis
 discissa membra, cum dolo captae tuo 260
 piaae sorores impium auderent nefas.
 potest Iason, si tuam causam amoves,
 suam tueri: nullus innocuum cruor
 contaminavit, afuit ferro manus
 proculque vestro purus a coetu stetit. 265
 tu, tu malorum machinatrix facinorum,
 feminea cui nequitia ad audenda omnia.
 robur virile est, nulla famae memoria,
 egredere, purga regna, letales simul
 tecum aufer herbas, libera cives metu, 270

is now in your possession.' 245. **damna**: imperative. 246. **redde crimen**: Condemn the accused, if you will, but restore the object (Jason) for which the crime was committed. 248. **peti**: *petii, petivi* (cf. *redit*, v. 984). 256. **quippe**: This word, in connection with a relative as here, or alone as in v. 488, introduces a clause of cause or reason. 257. **Acastus**: son and successor of Pelias as king of Iolcos (v. 133 n). The fear in which Jason stood of him is expressed in vv. 521, 526. 261. **piæ**: filial (see note on *pietas*, v. 438). Note antithesis of *piæ* and *impium*, and cf. Ovid (M. 7, 339) on the same theme: *Hic, ut quæque pia est, hortatibus impia prima est*. 265. **vestro**: identifying Medea with the powers of evil which she invoked. 270. **herbas**: used in her

alia sedens tellure sollicita deos.

MED. Profugere cogis? redde fugienti ratem
et redde comitem—fugere cur solam iubes?

non sola veni. bella si metuis pati,
utrumque regno pelle. cur sontes duos 275

distinguis? illi Pelia, non nobis iacet:
fugam, rapinas adice, desertum patrem
lacerumque fratrem, quidquid etiam nunc novas
docet maritus coniuges, non est meum:

totiens nocens sum facta, sed numquam mihi. 280
CR. Iam exisse decuit. quid seris fando moras?

MED. Supplex recedens illud extremum precor,
ne culpa natos matris insontes trahat.

CR. Vade: hos paterno ut genitor excipiam sinu.

MED. Per ego auspicatos regii thalami toros, 285
per spes futuras perque regnorum status,

Fortuna varia dubia quos agitat vice,
precor, brevem largire fugienti moram,
dum extrema natis mater infigo oscula,

fortasse moriens. CR. Fraudibus tempus petis.

MED. Quae fraus timeri tempore exiguo potest?

CR. Nullum ad nocendum tempus angustum est
malis.

MED. Parumne miserae temporis lacrimis negas?

CR. Etsi repugnat precibus infixus timor,
unus parando dabitur exilio dies. 295

magic rites (cf. v. 706 ff.). 271. *sollicita*: imperative. For thought cf. *invadam deos*, v. 424; *vidi aggressam deos*, v. 678. 274. *non sola veni*: cf. *qui auxilium ferat*, v. 197, and *redde comitem*, v. 278. 276. 'For him, not for me, was Pelias slain.' Medea argues that Jason, who had profited by her crimes, was at least equally guilty with herself, who had done them. She puts it with still greater force to Jason himself (vv. 500, 501—cf. *sontes duos*, v. 275). 282. *illud*: explained by the clause *ne...trahat*. 287. *dubia*: known to be nominative, because its final syllable, in arsis of the fourth foot, must be short. 288. *moram*: respite. 293. Do you deny me a respite (even one which is) too brief

MED. Nimis est, recidas aliquid ex isto licet:
et ipsa propero. CR. Capite supplicium lues,
clarum priusquam Phoebus attollat diem
nisi cedis Isthmo. sacra me thalami vocant,
vocat precari festus Hymenaeo dies. [Exit.] 300

CHORVS

Audax nimium qui freta primus
rate tam fragili perfida rupit
terrasque suas post terga videns
animam levibus credidit auris, 304
inter vitae mortisque vias 307
nimium gracili limite ducto.

Candida nostri saecula patres 329
videre, procul fraude remota. 330
sua quisque piger litora tangens
patrioque senex factus in arvo,
parvo dives, nisi quas tulerat
natale solum, non norat opes: 334
nondum quisquam sidera norat, 309
stellisque quibus pingitur aether 310
non erat usus, nondum pluvias
Hyadas poterat vitare ratis,
non Oleniae lumina caprae

for my tears (at parting with my children)? 296. 'Tis more than enough, though you should strike off a portion. **recidas**: *long*. 299. **Isthmo**: the abl. of place whence, used without a preposition, as in names of towns (cf. *lectis*, v. 380; *penatibus*, v. 450). **sacra thalami**: the marriage rites. 301-308. Cf. H. C. 1, 3, 9-12. 329. For the Golden Age, of which some features are given in the following verses, cf. Oct. 396-406; V. E. 4: O. M. 1, 89-112; H. Epd. 16, 41-64; Tibullus 1, 3, 33-46. **candida**: white, unspotted, pure. 331. **piger**: unambitious, content (cf. Hero. Fur. 198). 333. **parvo dives**: a favorite idea with Horace (cf. C. 2, 16, 13 ff.; 2, 18, 11 ff.; 3, 16, 39 ff., etc.). 309. **sidera**: the constellations, by means of whose positions the sailor in ancient times determined the points of the compass. 311. **pluvias Hyades**: see Cl. Dict. 313. **Oleniae...caprae**: Amalthea, the nurse of the infant Jove, described now as a beautiful woman (see Cl. Dict., artt. *Aega*

nec quae sequitur flectitque senex
 Attica tardus plaustra Bootes, 315
 nondum Boreas, nondum Zephyrus
 nomen habebant.

Ausus Tiphys pandere vasto
 carbasa ponto legesque novas
 scribere ventis: nunc lina sinu 320
 tendere toto, nunc prolato
 pede transversos captare notos
 nunc antemnas medio tutas
 ponere malo, nunc in summo
 religare loco, cum iam totos 325
 avidus nimium navita flatus
 optat et alto rubicunda tremunt
 sipara velo. 328
 bene dissaepi foedera mundi 335
 traxit in unum Thessala pinus
 iussitque pati verbera pontum
 partemque metus fieri nostri
 mare sepositum.

Amalthea, now as a she-goat, in either case translated to the skies and made a constellation. The season when it first became visible was stormy, hence the allusion in this passage. 315. *plaustra*: the constellation *Ursa Major*, still known as 'Charles's wain' in England. Being near the pole it was an object of great interest to the mariner and is referred to constantly in the poets (cf. *vv.* 405, 696). *Attica*: One version of the myth regarding Bootes makes him Arcas the son of Callisto (cf. O. M. 2, 401-530, translated to heaven, while the other identifies him with Icarus, an Athenian, father of Erigone. This latter form would justify the adjective *Attica*, transferring the epithet from Bootes to the wagon he drives. *tardus*: because the constellation, close to the pole, appears almost motionless. 316. *nondum...habebant*: cf. O. M. 1, 132. 318. *Tiphys*: For his fate see *v.* 617 ff. 321. *prolato...notos*: catch the breeze with yards trimmed, tack, sail close to the wind. 325. *bene*: modifies *dissaepi*, not *traxit*—brought together the lands well (wisely) separated before (cf. H. C. 1, 3, 21 ff.). 326. *Thessala*: because built and commanded by Jason, of the Thessalian town Iolcos. 328. *partem metus*: There were terrors enough for man before, but his conquest of the sea added new ones. 329. *mare sepositum*:

dedit illa graves improba poenas 340
 per tam longos ducta timores,
 cum duo montes, claustra profundi,
 hinc atque illinc subito impulsu
 velut aetherio gemerent sonitu,
 spargeret arces nubesque ipsas
 mare deprensum. 345
 palluit audax Tiphys et omnes
 labente manu misit habenas.
 Orpheus tacuit torpente lyra
 ipsaque vocem perdidit Argo.
 quid cum Siculi virgo Pelori, 350
 rabidos utero succincta canes,
 omnes pariter solvit hiatus?
 quis non totos horruit artus
 totiens uno latrante malo?
 quid cum Ausonium dirae pestes , 355
 voce canora mare mulcerent,
 cum Pieria resonans cithara
 Thracius Orpheus solitam cantu
 retinere rates paene coegit
 Sirena sequi? quod fuit hujus 360
 pretium cursus? aurea pellis
 ma¹ .sque mari Medea malum,

(formerly) an element apart. 340. *illa*: the Argo—*Thessala pinus*, v. 335. 342. *duo montes*: the Symplegades (v. 456; cf. *scopulos ragentes*, v. 610). 347. Let slip the tiller from his nerveless hand. 349. *vocem perdidit*: referring to the figure-head of the Argo, hewn from the speaking oak of Dodona and itself possessed of the power of speech. 350. *virgo*: Scylla (Homer, *Od.* 12, 73-100, 234-259; *O. M.* 14, 1-74; *V. A.* 3, 420-428). 354. *totiens latrante*: barking from each of its (six) throats. *malo*: monster. 355. *dirae pestes*: the sirens (Homer, *Od.* 12, 52 ff.). 357. *resonans*: sounding back, in contest with the sirens. 360. *sirena*: acc. 'Orpheus almost compelled the siren to follow, (though) wont to hold captive with her song the passing ships.' For Orpheus' power see vv. 626-629; *O. M.* 10, 86 ff.; and *Cl. Dict.* The alliteration in vv. 359-362 may be accidental, yet it is by

merces prima digna carina.

Nunc iam cessit pontus et omnes
 patitur leges: non Palladia 365
 compacta manu regumque ferens
 inclita remos quaeritur Argo—
 quaelibet altum cumba pererrat;
 terminus omnis motus et urbes
 muros terra posuere nova. 370
 nil qua fuerat sede reliquit
 pervius orbis:
 Indus gelidum potat Araxen,
 Albin Persae Rhenumque bibunt—
 venient annis saecula seris, 375
 quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
 laxet et ingens pateat tellus
 Tethysque novos detegat orbes
 nec sit terris ultima Thule.

no means uncommon in these tragedies. 363. *merces*: appositive to *pellis* and *Medea*—'wares worthy the first ship.' The sin of overstepping the bounds appointed by the Creator (cf. v. 335 n) has brought its own punishment. *Merces* suggests that the myth of the *Argo* and the golden fleece may represent allegorically the beginning of commerce for the Greeks. 364. *nunc iam*: *now*, transferring the thought from the *Argo's* time to that of the chorus, and perhaps in the poet's mind to his own day, when commerce had attained such great proportions. 365. *Palladia*: see v. 2 n. Here abl. 369. *motus*: sc. *orbis*, 372 *orbis*: cf. *orbi*, v. 5 n. 375-379. This passage would be more remarkable if we could suppose that Seneca meant by it anything more than a vague reference to some ideal Atlantis, such as Plato had described. One fanciful critic has suggested that the Spaniard Seneca is here foretelling the discovery of America by his countryman Columbus!

ACT III

[Enter Medea from her house, followed by the old nurse, who tries to calm her.]

NUTR. Alumna, celerem quo rapis tectis
pedem? 380

resiste et iras comprime ac retine impetum.

Incerta qualis entheos gressus tulit
cum iam recepto maenas insanit deo
Pindi nivalis vertice aut Nysae iugis,
talis recursat huc et huc motu efferro, 385

furoris ore signa lymphati gerens.
flammata facies spiritum ex alto citat,
proclamat, oculos uberi fletu rigat,
renidet: omnis specimen affectus capit.

quo pondus animi vergat, ubi ponat minas 391

haeret: minatur aestuat queritur gemit. 390

ubi se iste fluctus franget? exundat furor. 392

non facile secum versat aut medium scelus;

se vincet: irae novimus veteris notas.

magnum aliquid instat, efferum immane impium:

vultum furoris cerno. di fallant metum!

380. *tectis*: cf. *Isthmo*. v. 299 n. 381. *resiste*: intransitive—
'Pause.' 383. *maenas*: The *maenades* (*bacchantes*, *thyiades*) were
the female priests of Bacchus, famed for their wild orgies. In v. 806
Medea applies the term to herself (cf. v. 849). *Nysae*: a city in India,
where, according to one account, Bacchus was reared. One of his Greek
names (*Dionysus*) has been supposed to be a derivative of this word.
391. The figure is that of a balance whose opposing weights are so nearly
equal it is doubtful which will go down. 393. *facile*: adjective.
394. *vincet*: outdo. *veteris*: as displayed in the cases of her brother

MED. [*to herself.*] Si quaeris odio, misera, quem
statuas modum:

imitare amorem. regias egone ut faces
inulta patiar? segnis hic ibit dies,
tanto petitus ambitu, tanto datus? 400
dum terra caelum media libratum feret
nitidusque certas mundus evolvit vices
numerusque harenis derit et solem dies,
noctem sequentur astra, dum siccas polus
versabit Arctos, flumina in pontum cadent, 405
numquam meus cessabit in poenas furor
crescetque semper—quae ferarum immanitas,
quae Scylla, quae Charybdis Ausonium mare
Siculumque sorbens quaeve anhelantem premens
Titana tantis Aetna fervebit minis? 410
non rapidus amnis, non procellosum mare
Pontusve Coro saevus aut vis ignium
adiuta flatu possit imitari impetum
irasque nostras; sternam et evertam omnia.

Timuit Creontem ac bella Thessalici ducis? 415
amor timere neminem verus potest.
sed cesserit coactus et dederit manus:

Absyrtus and her uncle Pelias. 397. odio: dat. misera: addressing herself. quem: interrogative. 398. imitare amorem: Copy your love, which knew no bounds, but sacrificed all to itself. faces: torches carried in the marriage procession, hence marriage—here that of the princess Creusa to Jason. 401. Cf. O. M. 1, 12, 13: [*nec*] circumfuso pendebat in aere tellus | ponderibus librata suis. 403. derit: deerit (cf. derat, v. 992). 404. siccās: never setting (lit., dry). The arctoe (ursa major and ursa minor) at the latitude of Greece and and Rome, as at our own, were always above the horizon—did not dip into the surrounding ocean as constellations farther from the pole were thought to do (cf. velitum mare, v. 758). 410. Titana: acc. Enceladus, who was buried alive beneath Mt. Aetna (V. A. 3, 578-582). Ovid (M. 5, 352) follows Aeschylus in making it Typhoeus who was thus punished. The myths of the Titans and the Giants are greatly confused. 413. impetum irasque: hendiadys. 415. Thessalici ducis: Acastus (cf. v. 257), who had demanded that Medea be given up for punishment for the murder of his father. 417. cesserit...dederit: suppose he

adire certe et coniugem extremo alloqui
 sermone potuit—hoc quoque extimuit ferox:
 laxare certe tempus immitis fugae 420
 genero licebat—liberis unus dies
 datus est duobus. non queror tempus breve:
 multum patebit. faciet hic faciet dies
 quod nullus umquam taceat—invadam deos
 et cuncta quatiā. NVTR. Recipe turbatum
 malis, 425
 era, pectus, animum mitiga. MED. Sola est quies,
 mecum ruina cuncta si video obruta:
 mecum omnia abeant. trahere, cum pereas, libet.
 NVTR. Quam multa sint timenda, si perstas, vide:
 nemo potentes aggredi tutus potest. 430

[*Enter Jason soliloquizing and not seen at first by Medea.*]

JAS. O dura fata semper et sortem asperam,
 cum saevit et cum parcit ex aequo malam!
 remedia quotiens invenit nobis deus
 periculis peiora: si vellem fidem
 praestare meritis coniugis, leto fuit 435
 caput offerendum; si mori nollem, fide
 misero carendum. non timor vicit fidem,
 sed trepida pietas: quippe sequeretur necem

has—cf. *placeat* v. 288. 418. *coniugem*: Medea. 419. *ferox*:
 ironical, and rendered intensely emphatic by its unusual position and its
 antithesis to *extimuit*. 422. *non queror*: Note the sudden change of
 tone. 'I do not complain that the time is (too) short. It will go far.'
 424. *nullus*: sc. *dies*. 428. *pereas*: The 'general' second person.
 432. *malam*: agrees with *sortem*—'Evil alike when it smites and when
 it spares.' 434. *fidem praestare*: show fidelity, i. e., be faithful.
 437. *misero*: sc. *mihi*—apparent agent. 438. *pietas*: reverent
 affection, commonly that of a child for his parents, here of a father for
 his children. In v. 779 *pias* is said of Althaea's affection for her brother;
 in Oct. 52 and 737 it stands for the nurse's love for her foster child and in
 Oct. 844 for the prefect's devotion to his imperial master. See also *vv.*

proles parentum. sancta si caelum incolis,
Iustitia, numen invoco ac testor tuum: 440

nati patrem vicere. quin ipsam quoque,
etsi ferox est corde nec patiens iugi,
consulere natis malle quam thalamis reor.
constituit animus precibus iratam aggredi. [*Medea*
sees him.]

atque ecce, viso memet exiluit, furit, 445
fert odia prae se: totus in vultu est dolor.

MED. Fugimus, Iason: fugimus—hoc non est
novum,

mutare sedes; causa fugiendi nova est:
pro te solebam fugere. discedo exeo,
penatibus profugere quam cogis tuis: 450

at quo remittis? Phasin et Colchos petam
patriumque regnum quaeque fraternus cruor
perfudit arva? quas peti terras iubes?
quae maria monstras? Pontici fauces freti
per quas revexi nobilem regum manum 455

adulterum secuta per Symplegadas?
parvamne Iolcon, Thessala an Tempe petam?
quascumque aperui tibi vias, clausi mihi—
quo me remittis? exuli exilium imperas

545, 943. *quippe*: causal as in v. 256, but here unaccompanied by another connective. *sequeretur*: lit. follow, hence share. 441. *ipsam*: Medea—so *iratam*, v. 444. 444. *animus*: sc. *meus*. 445. *viso memet*: abl. abs.—at sight of me. 446. *fert...prae se*: displays, exhibits. *odia*: plural of an abstract noun, where we should use the singular. 447. *hoc*: explained by its appositive, *mutare*. 450. *penatibus*: cf. *Isthmo* (v. 299) and *tectis* (v. 380). 451. *at quo*: Mss. have *ad quos*. Supply *me* as object of *remittis*. The question is repeated in v. 459. 453. *quas peti terras iubes*: cf. Euripides, *Med.* 502 ff. This sentence is quoted by Quintilian (I. O. 9, 2, 8) to illustrate one use of the rhetorical question, which he says is used, ...“To throw odium on the person addressed; as Medea says in Seneca, *Quas peti terras iubes?*” This is one of the few bits of external evidence we have of the authorship of the play. 456. *adulterum*: lover, i. e. Jason. 457. *Tempe*: a Greek acc. plural. 459. *exuli*: already an

nec das. eatur. regius iussit gener:	460
nihil recusō. dira suppliciaingere:	
merui. cruentis paelicem poenis premat	
regalis ira, vinculis oneret manus	
clausamque saxo noctis aeternae obruat:	
minora meritis patiar—ingratum caput,	465
revolvat animus igneos tauri halitus	
hostisque subiti tela, cum iussu meo	469
terrigena miles mutua caede occidit;	470
adice expetita spolia Phrixei arietis	
somnoque iussum lumina ignoto dare	
insomne monstrum, traditum fratrem neci	
et scelere in uno non semel factum scelus,	
ausasque natas fraude deceptas mea	475
secare membra non revicturi senis:	
per spes tuorum liberum et certum larem,	478
per victa monstra, per manus, pro te quibus	
numquam peperci, perque praeteritos metus,	480

extle. **imperas nec das**: 'bricks without straw.' 462. **paelicem**: a favorite word in the speech of Seneca's heroines. Here and in *v.* 495 Medea applies it with pathetic irony to herself, but usually it is a term of reproach to a rival, as in *v.* 920. 469. **hostis subiti**: the *terrigenae*, warriors who sprang into life full armed when Jason had sown the dragon's teeth (cf. *v.* 169 n.; *O. M.* 7, 13¹¹). 470. **miles**: collective (cf. *milite*, *V. A.* 2, 20). **occidit**: fell, perished. 471. **spolia Phrixei arietis**: the golden fleece (*aurea pellis*, *v.* 361). It was Phrixus who was carried on the ram's back to Colchis (see *Cl. Diet.*, artt. *Phrixus*, *Helle*). 473. **monstrum**: the sleepless dragon which guarded the fleece in Colchis. It was drugged by Medea (*O. M.* 7, 149-156), who thus enabled her lover to possess the prize. **fratrem**: Absyrtus. Seneca follows the more common version of his story; that being still a boy he was carried away by Medea in her flight, and, when their father was about to overtake them, was cut in pieces and his limbs thrown into the sea one by one in order to delay the pursuit (cf. *vv.* 131 ff., 278, 963). 474. 'Crime done not once (but more than once) in one act of crime'—i. e., not merely was the brother slain, but his body was mutilated and to crown all cast unburied into the sea. 475. **natas**: sc. *Pelia* (or *Pelias*). See *v.* 133 n. 479. **monstra**: the fire-breathing bulls, the *terrigenae* (*v.* 470), the guardian serpent (*v.* 473).

per caelum et undas, coniugi testes mei,
 miserere, redde supplici felix vicem. 482
 aliena quaerens regna deserui mea: 477
 ex opibus illis, quas procul raptas Scythae 483
 usque a perustis Indiae populis agunt,
 quas quia referta vix domus gaza capit, 485
 ornamus auro nemora, nil exul tuli
 nisi fratris artus: hos quoque impendi tibi;
 tibi patria cessit, tibi pater, frater, pudor—
 hac dote nupsi. redde fugienti sua.
 IAS. Perimere cum te vellet infestus Creon, 490
 lacrimis meis evictus exilium dedit.
 MED. Poenam putabam: munus ut video est fuga.
 IAS. Dum licet abire, profuge teque hinc eripe:
 gravis ira regum est semper. MED. Hoc suades
 mihi,
 praestas Creusae: paelicem invisam amoves. 495
 IAS. Medea amores obicit? MED. Et caedem
 et dolos.
 IAS. Obicere tandem quod potes crimen mihi?
 MED. Quodcumque feci. IAS. Restat hoc unum
 insuper,
 tuis ut etiam sceleribus fiam nocens.

481. **coniugi**: gen. of *coniugium*. 482. **miserere**: used absolutely — 'Have pity.' **felix**: kindly. **redde. vicem**: reciprocate. 483. **Scythae**: Here and in v. 528 Medea calls her people by this name. Being on the borders of Scythia the Colchians may be spoken of carelessly as belonging to that race. 485. **quas**: *et eas*—'And, as the palace, filled with treasure, could hardly contain *these* riches (*opibus*), we adorned the woods with gold.' The allusion is to the golden fleece, which was hung upon a tree. 488. The first two feet may be treated as anapest-anapest or as proceleusmatic-lambus (see *Intro.* p. 15, and cf. 670 n.). 489. **redde. sua**: cf. *sunt hic sua praemia laudi*, V. A. 1, 461. For the idea cf. Medea's demands of Creon in *vv.* 197, 272, 273. 490. The truth of this pitiful plea of Jason's is confirmed by Creon's statement (*v.* 184). 492. **poenam putabam**: sc. *fugam*. Note the antithesis between *poenam* and *munus*, and the strong irony of the latter. Cf. Ovid's expression, *Poenam pro munere poscis* (*Met.* 2, 99). 496. **obicit**: throw up

MED. Tua illa, tua sunt illa: cui prodest scelus 500
is fecit—omnes coniugem infamem arguant,
solus tuere, solus insontem voca:
tibi innocens sit quisquis est pro te nocens.

IAS. Ingrata vita est cuius acceptae pudet.

MED. Retinenda non est cuius acceptae pudet. 505

IAS. Quin potius ira concitum pectus doma,
placare natis. MED. Abdico eiuro abnuo—
meis Creusa liberis fratres dabit?

IAS. Regina natis exulum, afflictis potens.

MED. Non veniat umquam tam malus miseris
dies 510

qui prole foeda misceat prolem inclitam,
Phoebi nepotes Sisyphi nepotibus.

IAS. Quid, misera, meque teque in exitium
trahis?

abscede quaeso. MED. Supplicem audivit Creo.

IAS. Quid facere possim, loquere. MED. Pro
me? vel scelus. 515

IAS. Hinc rex et illinc— MED. Est et his major
metus:

Medea. nos † configere certemus sine,
sit pretium Iason. IAS. Cedo defessus malis.

as a reproachful reminder. 500. tua...fecit: cf. vv. 275, 276, 278.
501. arguant: cf. *placeat*, v. 288 n. 503. 'You should hold him guilt-
less who is guilty for your sake.' 504. cuius acceptae: cf. the
familiar *ab urbe condita* of Livy, and translate, 'which one is ashamed of
having (so) received.' 507. placare: imperative. abdico, etc.: 'I
reject, forswear, disown them.' 510. non: With the optative sub-
junctive we should expect *ne* (cf. *non Teucros agat*, V. A. 12, 78). 512.
Phoebi: cf. v. 28 n. Sisyphi: The royal house of Corinth was de-
scended from Sisyphus, whose ancestry ran back through Aeolus, Hellen,
Deucalion and Prometheus to Iapetus, one of the original Titans. Com-
pared with the divine progeny of Phoebus his offspring would be *foeda*
(v. 511). 517. nos...sine: The reading here is corrupt and the sense
obscure. Perhaps the most satisfactory solution is found in making
certemus subordinate to *sine* and *configere* to *certemus*: 'Let me (us)
strive to contend (with the king); let the prize be Jason.' Leo places a

et ipsa casus saepe iam expertos time.

MED. Fortuna semper omnis infra me stetit. 520

IAS. Acastus instat. MED. Propior est hostis

Creo:

utrumque profuge. non ut in socerum manus

armes nec ut te caede cognata inquines

Medea cogit: innocens mecum fuge.

IAS. Et quis resistet, gemina si bella ingru-
ant, 525

Creo atque Acastus arma si iungant sua?

MED. His adice Colchos, adice et Aeeten ducem,
Scythas Pelasgis iunge: demersos dabo.

IAS. Alta extimesco sceptrum. MED. Ne cupias
vide.

IAS. Suspecta ne sint, longa colloquia am-
puta. 530

MED. Nunc summe toto Iuppiter caelo tona.

intende dextram, vindices flammam para

omnemque ruptis nubibus mundum quate.

nec deligenti tela librentur manu

vel me vel istum: quisquis e nobis cadet 535

nocens peribit, non potest in nos tuum

errare fulmen. IAS. Sana meditari incipe

et placida fare. si quod ex soceri domo

potest fugam levare solamen, pete.

MED. Contemnere animus regias, ut scis, opes 540

potest soletque; liberos tantum fugae

habere comites liceat in quorum sinu

lacrimas profundam. te novi nati manent.

IAS. Parere precibus cupere me fateor tuis:

pietas vetat; namque istud ut possim pati, 545

period after *confligere*. 523. *caede cognata*: Acastus and Jason were
cousins. 529. *ne cupias vide*: 'Take care that ambition be not
your true motive.' 534. *deligenti...istum*: that discriminates be-
tween us. 545. *pietas*: cf. v. 438 n. *memet*: *Cogat* here has two

non ipse memet cogat et rex et socer.
 haec causa vitae est, hoc perusti pectoris
 curis levamen. spiritu citius queam
 carere, membris, luce. MED. Sic natos amat?
 bene est, tenetur, vulnere patuit locus.— 550
 suprema certe liceat abeuntem loqui
 mandata, liceat ultimum amplexum dare:
 gratum est et illud. voce iam extrema peto,
 ne, si qua noster dubius effudit dolor,
 maneant in animo verba: melioris tibi 555
 memoria nostri sedeat; haec ira data
 oblitterentur. IAS. Omnia ex animo expuli
 precorque et ipse, fervidam ut mentem regas
 placideque tractes: miseras lenit quies. [Exit.]
 MED. Discessit. itane est? vadis oblitus mei 560
 et tot meorum facinorum? excidimus tibi?
 numquam excidemus. hoc age, omnes advoca
 vires et artes. fructus est scelerum tibi
 nullum scelus putare. vix fraudi est locus:
 timemur. hac aggredere, qua nemo potest 565
 quicquam timere. perge nunc, aude, incipe
 quidquid potest Medea, quidquid non potest.
 Tu, fida nutrix, socia maeroris mei
 variique casus, misera consilia adiuva.

objects, *memet* representing the person and the *ut* clause the act required. It is a rare construction, two accusatives, or acc. of person and infinitive representing the act, being more common. 547. *perusti*: seared. In *v.* 484 *perustis* had its more literal sense of sunburned, swarthy. 550. *tenetur*: 'I have him.' *Sic...locus*: aside. For the thought implied cf. *v.* 26 n.; see also Euripides, *Med.* 813. 551. *abeuntem*: agrees here with the subject (*me*) of the infinitive. Instead of this the following constructions might have been used after *liceat*: (1) *abeunti loqui* (most common), (2) *ut abiens loquar*, (3) *abiens loquar*, or (4) simply the infinitive, as in *v.* 542. 555. *melioris nostri*: my better self. 556. *haec*: sc. *verba*. 560. *itane est*: For the spirit of the speaker see *v.* 117. 562. *age*: addressing herself. 565. *hac...timere*: Attack at a point where none can conceive of danger—alluding again (*cf. v.*

est palla nobis, munus aetherium, domus 570
 decusque regni, pignus Aeetae datum
 a Sole generis, est et auro textili
 monile fulgens quodque gemmarum nitor
 distinguit aurum, quo solent cingi comae.
 haec nostra nati dona nubenti ferant, 575
 sed ante diris inlita ac tincta artibus.
 vocetur Hecate. sacra letifica appara:
 statuuntur arae, flamma iam tectis sonet.

CHORVS

Nulla vis flammae tumidive venti
 tanta, nec teli metuenda torti, 580
 quanta cum coniunx viduata taedis
 ardet et odit;

non ubi hibernos nebulosus imbres
 Auster advexit properatque torrens
 Hister et iunctos vetat esse pontes 585
 ac vagus errat;

non ubi impellit Rhodanus profundum,
 aut ubi in rivos nivibus solutis
 sole iam forti medioque vere
 tabuit Haemus. 590

caecus est ignis stimulatus ira
 nec regi curat patiturve frenos
 aut timet mortem: cupit ire in ipsos
 obuius enses.

26 n.) to the inhuman purpose gradually maturing in her mind. 571. *pignus... generis*: an earnest of his descent (cf. the *pignora* demanded by Phaethon, O. M. 2, 8). 575. *nati*: sc. *mei (nostri)*. *nubenti*: the bride, who was said by the Romans to *veil* herself for her husband. 578. *arae*: in preparation for her invocation of the powers of darkness (v. 740 ff.). 590. *Haemus*: a mountain range on the north of Thrace, believed by the ancients to be of amazing height (cf. Pliny, N. H. 4, 18). The thawing in spring of the deep snows which had fallen through the winter would produce for rustic on-lookers in the distance very much the

parcite, o divi, veniam precamur, 595
 vivat ut tutus mare qui subegit.
 sed furit vinci dominus profundi
 regna secunda.
 ausus aeternos agitare currus
 immemor metae iuvenis paternae 600
 quos polo sparsit furiosus ignes
 ipse recepit.
 constitit nulli via nota magno:
 vade qua tutum populo priori,
 rumpe nec sacro violente sancta 605
 foedera mundi.
 Quisquis audacis tetigit carinae
 nobiles remos nemorisque sacri
 Pelion densa spoliavit umbra,
 quisquis intravit scopulos vagantes 610
 et tot emensus pelagi labores
 barbara funem religavit ora

same effect as if the range itself were melting away (*tabuit*). 596. *mare qui subegit*: Jason. 597. *vinci*: the subject is *regna*. *dominus profundi*: Neptune (cf. *profundi...dominator maris*, v. 4). 598. *regna secunda*: the sea (cf. *secundo maria sceptro regis*, Herc. Fur. 599; *secundum fluctibus regnum moves*, Phaedra 904). On the dethronement of Kronos (Saturn) by his sons the latter cast lots for the several portions of his dominions (Homer, II. 15, 184 ff.). Jupiter thus received the heavens, Neptune the *second* choice, the sea, and Pluto the third (cf. *tertia sortis*, Herc. Fur. 609, 833), the unseen land of the dead. 599. *currus*: of the sun-god (O. M. 2, 107-110). 600. *iuvenis*: Phaethon (see O. M. 2, 1-328). 603. *constitit...magno*: has proved costly. *Magno* is abl. price. 604. *populo priori*: former generations. 605. *sacro...sancta*: *sacrosancta*, divided by *imiesis*. The sense is *inviolable, immutable*. *violente*: voc., best translated by an English adverb. 606. *foedera*: laws of nature. For the sentiment cf. *neve...naturae pollue foedus*, O. M. 10, 353. The particular law referred to here is that by which the gods were supposed to have confined man's sphere of conquest to the land and forbidden him the sea (cf. v. 385 n.; Horace, C. 1, 3, 21 ff.). In vv. 607-667 is given an account of the fate that befell several argonautic heroes. 610. *scopulos vagantes*: the Symplegades (cf. v. 342 n.; v. 456). 612. *barbara...ora*: Colchis.

raptor externi rediturus auri,
 exitu diro temerata ponti
 iura piavit. 615
 exigit poenas mare provocatum:
 Tiphys in primis, domitor profundis,
 liquit indocto regimen magistro:
 litore externo, procul a paternis
 occidens regnis tumuloque vili 620
 tectus ignotas iacet inter umbras.
 Aulis amissi memor inde regis
 portibus lentis retinet carinas
 stare querentes.
 ille vocali genitus Camena, 625
 cuius ad chordas modulante plectro
 restitit torrens, siluere venti,
 cum suo cantu volucris relicto
 adfuit tota comitante silva,
 Thracios sparsus iacuit per agros, 630

613. *externi...auri*: the golden fleece. 614. *exitu*: abl. means, with *piavit*—by a dreadful end. 617. *in primis*: may be taken literally—among the first (in time)—or as the phrase *imprimis*, 'especially.' Tiphys lost his life before the Argo reached Colchis and was succeeded at the helm by Erginus (*indocto magistro*, v. 619), or, according to some accounts, by Ancaeus, a son of Neptune. 622. *Aulis...retinet carinas*: This possibly suggests the idea that the expedition against Troy had assembled at Aulis while Medea and Jason were still at Corinth. Tiphys (cf. v. 3 n., 617 n.) was a Boeotian, and the Boeotian port of Aulis (here personified) is represented as detaining the Greek fleet (or all ships) from running into the same perils which had cost him his life. 624. *stare querentes*: lamenting that they are not allowed to sail. 625 *ille*: Orpheus, who is said to have been the son of Apollo and the muse (*camena*) Calliope. The instances given here of his power to charm inanimate objects with his lyre are familiar. Ovid (M. 10, 1-77) tells of his passion for Eurydice and his descent into Hades to rescue her from death. It is said further that the women of Thrace, incensed at the bard's devotion to the memory of his lost wife, and consequent neglect of themselves, tore him in pieces (hence *sparsus...per agros*). The head (v. 631) floated down the Hebrus river and across the sea to Lesbos (O. M. 11, 1-60), thus transferring the power of lyric song to that island, where Alcaeus and

at caput tristi fluitavit Hebro:
contigit notam Styga Tartarumque,
non rediturus.

stravit Alcides Aquilone natos,
patre Neptuno genitum necavit 635
sumere innumeras solitum figuras;
ipse post terrae pelagique pacem,
post feri Ditis patefacta regna,
vivid ardentis recubans in Oeta
praebuit saevis sua membra flammis, 640
tabe consumptus gemini cruoris
munere nuptae.

stravit Ancaeum violentus ictu
saetiger; fratrem, Meleagre, matris
impius mactas morerisque dextra 645
matris iratae. meruere cuncti
morte quod crimen tener expiavit
Herculi magno puer inrepertus,
raptus, heu, tutas puer inter undas.

Sappho, the first lyric poets, afterwards lived and sang. 631. *tristi*: saddened by the burden it bore. 632. *notam*: because he had crossed it before, in quest of Eurydice (cf. O. M. 11, 61—*quae loca viderat ante*). 634. *Alcides*: Hercules. *Aquilone natos*: Calais and Zetes, the Boreades, called in *v.* 281 *sati Borea*. They were among the numerous victims of Hercules' prowess. 635. *Neptuno genitum*: Periclymenus (O. M. 12, 556-572). 637. *pacem*: conquest—peace by subjugation. 640. Cf. *vv.* 777, 778. The tragedy Hercules Oetaeus deals with this theme. 641. *gemini cruoris*: the blood of the centaur Nessus, mingled with the hydra's poison from Hercules' arrow. 642. *nuptae*: Deianira (O. M. 9, 141-272). 644. *saetiger*: the Calydonian boar. 645. *impius*: 'unnatural,' in slaying a relative. *moreris*: from *morior*. *dextra matris*: see Cl. Dict., artt. *Althaea*, *Meleager* (cf. *vv.* 779, 780; O. M. 8, 445-525). 646. *meruere...expiavit*: a confusion of two thoughts. It might be expressed either (1) *meruere cuncti poenam (mortem) qua crimen expiavit*, or (2) *commisere cuncti morte quod crimen expiavit*. In either case the thought is that having ventured upon the forbidden element all deserved the fate that had befallen Hylas, i. e. drowning. 648. *puer*: Hylas (see Cl. Dict.). 649. *tutas*: Not the stormy ocean but the quiet wa-

ite nunc, fortes, perarate pontum 650
 fonte timendo.

Idmonem, quamvis bene fata nosset,
 condidit serpens Libycis harenis;
 omnibus verax, sibi falsus uni
 concidit Mopsus caruitque Thebis 655
 ille si vere cecinit futura.

igne fallaci nociturus Argis 658
 Nauplius praeceps cadet in profundum;
 * * patrioque pendet 660a
 crimine poenas 660b

fulmine et ponto moriens Oileus;
 coniugis fatum redimens Pheraei
 uxor, impendens animam marito.
 ipse qui praedam spoliūque iussit
 aureum prima revehi carina, 665
 ustus accenso Pelias aeno

ters of a spring, where none would look for danger. 651. *fonte timendo*: abl. abs. of cause—'Since it is the spring that is to be feared, go, plow the ocean fearlessly' (*fortes*). 656 *ille*: Mopsus, the seer. 659. *Nauplius*: There are three of this name in the old mythology. Seneca here identifies the Argonaut with another of the name, the father of Palamedes, who was incensed at the treatment his son had received from the Greeks (V. A. 2, 82 ff.), and in revenge lured their returning fleet upon the rocks by means of a false beacon (*igne fallaci*). He is said to have met a like fate later, himself. See also the account given by the courier Eurybates in Agam. 558-570, where the expression *perflida face* is used. 660. To preserve the Sapphic measure a half-line must be supplied, and Leo suggests *occidet proles*. 661. It was Ajax, here called by his father's name Oileus, who perished *fulmine et ponto* on his way homeward from Troy (cf. V. A. 1, 43 ff.; Homer, Od. 4, 449 ff.). Our author here intimates that the real reason for his destruction was his father's offense in having sailed in the Argo (*patrio pendet crimine poenas*). 662. *coniugis Pheraei*: Admetus, king of Pherae, whose wife Alcestis voluntarily gave up her life to save his (*impendens animam marito*), and thus helped atone for the sin of her father, Pellas, who had instigated the expedition of the Argo (vv. 664-665). This reading makes *uxor* a second subject of *pendet*. 664. *ipse...Pe-*

arsit angustas vagus inter undas.
iam satis, divi, mare vindicastis:
 parcite iusso.

llas: see v. 139 n. 667. *angustas...undas*: not the mighty waves of ocean but the bubblings of a caldron—a most unheroic fate (cf. v. 651 n.). 669. The chorus closes with an appeal to the angry gods to be satisfied with the fate of those who had fallen already and spare their leader Jason, who had merely obeyed orders. *iusso*: cf. Tro. 870: *ad auctorem redit sceleris coacti culpa*.

ACT IV

NVTR. Pavet animus, horret, magna perniciēs
adest. 670

immane quantum augescit et semet dolor
accendit ipse vimque praeteritam integrat.
vidi furem saepe et aggressam deos,
caelum trahentem: maius his, maius parat
Medea monstrum. namque ut attonito gradu 675
evasit et penetrale funestum attigit,
totas opes effundit et quidquid diu
etiam ipsa timuit promit atque omnem explicat
turbam malorum, arcana secreta abdita,
et triste laeva † comprecans sacrum manu 680
pestes vocat quascumque ferventis creat
harena Libyae quasque perpetua nive
Taurus cohercet frigore Arctoo rigens,
et omne monstrum. tracta magicis cantibus
squamifera latebris turba desertis adest. 685
hic saeva serpens corpus immensum trahit
trifidamque linguam exertat et quaerit quibus
mortifera veniat: carmine audito stupet

670. The first two feet may be tribrach-anapest, or proceleusmatic-lambus (see Introd. p. 15, and cf. 488 n.). 671. *immane qauntum augescit*: 'how fearfully grows.' 673. *furem*: sc. *Medeam*; so with *aggressam* and *trahentem*. 674. *caelum trahentem*: cf. *te quoque Luna traho*, O. M. 7, 207. 675. *attonito*: bewildered. 676. *penetrale funestum*: the unholy shrine (cf. *arae* v. 578). 677. *totas opes effundit*: is lavishing all her powers. All the principal verbs in the sentence (*effundit*, *promit*, *explicat*, *vocat*) are present tense. The nurse is looking on and describing what she sees. 678. *etiam ipsa*: There were powers which even Medea had shrunk from invoking before, but now fears and scruples alike are forgotten. 680. *laeva*: with the left hand, as ill-omened. 682, 683. *Libyae*, *Taurus*: extremes of climate. Medea's power ranged over them all. 687. *exertat*: *exsertat*.

tumidumque nodis corpus aggestis plicat
 cogitque in orbes. 'parva sunt' inquit 'mala' 690
 et vile telum est, ima quod tellus creat:
 caelo petam venena. iam iam tempus est
 aliquid movere fraude vulgari altius.
 huc ille vasti more torrentis iacens
 descendat anguis cuius immensos duae, 695
 maior minorque, sentiunt nodos ferae
 (maior Pelasgis apta, Sidoniis minor)
 pressasque tandem solvat Ophiuchus manus
 virusque fundat; adsit ad cantus meos
 lacessere ausus gemina Python numina. 700
 et Hydra et omnis redeat Herculea manu
 succisa serpens, caede se reparans sua.
 tu quoque relictis pervigil Colchis ades,
 sopite primum cantibus, serpens, meis.'

Postquam evocavit omne serpentum genus, 705
 congerit in unum frugis infaustae mala:
 quaecumque generat invius saxis Eryx,
 quae fert opertis hieme perpetua iugis
 sparsus cruore Caucasus Promethei.

quaerit: sc. *eos*. 693. **fraude vulgari:** such arts as the common herd can use. 695. **anguis:** the constellation Draco. 696. **ferae:** the *arctoe*. 697. The constellation *ursa major* was known to the Greeks in Homer's time (Il. 18, 487; Od. 5, 275), while *ursa minor*, though long known to the Phoenicians, was not pointed out to the Greeks till the time of Thales. 698. **solvat Ophiuchus:** 'let the serpent-holder (Bootes) relax his close grip'—i. e., release the serpent. 699. **virus:** acc. 700. **ausus:** which dared. **gemina numina:** Apollo and Diana. The former was the slayer of the python, and the oracle at Delphi, where the encounter took place, was sacred to him alone, though here his sister is associated with him in the exploit. Cf. the extension of the epithet *tonantibus* to Juno in v. 59. 702. **caede...sua:** Whenever one of the hydra's heads was lopped off, two grew up in its place. 703. **tu...serpens:** the sleepless dragon (cf. *insomne monstrum*, v. 473 n.) which guarded the golden fleece in Colchis. 706. **frugis:** To the venom of serpents she now adds the juices of poisonous plants. 707. **Eryx:**

et quis sagittas divites Arabes linunt 711
 pharetraque pugnax Medus aut Parthi leves 710
 aut quos sub axe frigido sucos legunt 712
 lucis Suebae nobiles Hercyniis:
 quodcumque tellus vere nidifico creat
 aut rigida cum iam bruma discussit decus 715
 nemorum et nivali cuncta constrinxit gelu,
 quodcumque gramen flore mortifero viret,
 quicumque tortis sucus in radicibus
 causas nocendi gignit, attrectat manu.
 Haemonius illas contulit pestes Athos, 720
 has Pindus ingens, illa Pangaei iugis
 teneram cruenta falce deposuit comam;
 has aluit altum gurgitem Tigris premens,
 Danuvius illas, has per arentes plagas
 tepidis Hydaspes gemmifer currens aquis, 725
 nomenque terris qui dedit Baetis suis
 Hesperia pulsans maria languenti vado.
 haec passa ferrum est, dum parat Phoebus diem,
 illius alta nocte succisus frutex;
 at huius ungue secta cantato seges. 730
 Mortifera carpit gramina ac serpentium
 saniem exprimit miscetque et obscenas aves
 maestique cor bubonis et raucae strigis

the well-known mountain in Sicily. 711. *divites*: an epithet frequently applied to the Arabs (cf. H. C. 3, 24, 2; Epist. 1, 6, 6, etc.). *linunt*: smear, here poison. 713. *Suebae*: fem., as if those who dealt in witchcraft and poisons would naturally be women. 725. *gemmifer*: Claudian, writing in the fourth century of our era, spoke of the *gemmis Hydaspis* (*de III Consulatu Honorii*, 4). 726. *nomen... dedit*: The *provincia Baetica*, in which was Corduba, Seneca's native city, received its name from the stream. 727. *Hesperia*: a general term for western—in the direction of *Hesperus*, the evening star. To the Greeks it sometimes meant Italian (cf. V. A. 1, 530). Here, as often to the Romans, it meant Spanish (cf. H. C. 1, 36, 4). 728, 729. Some herbs must be gathered at dawn, others at night. 731 ff. Cf. the witches' song over the caldron in *Macbeth* 3, 4, 1-38. 731. *serpentium*: the regular form of the gen. plur. In v. 705 *serpentum* is written for

exsecta vivae viscera. haec scelerum artifex
 discreta ponit; his rapax vis ignium, 735
 his gelida pigri frigoris glacies inest.
 addit venenis verba non illis minus
 metuenda. sonuit ecce vesano gradu
 canitque. mundus vocibus primis tremit.

[*Medea calls upon all the powers of evil; and especially Hecate, to aid in her vengeance upon her rival.*]

MED. Comprecor vulgus silentum vosque ferales
 deos 740
 et Chaos caecum atque opacam Ditis umbrosi
 domum,
 Tartari ripis † ligatos squalidae Mortis specus.
 supplicis, animae, remissis currite ad thalamos
 novos:
 rota resistat membra torquens, tangat Ixion humum,
 Tantalus securus undas hauriat Pirenidas. 745
 gravior uni poena sedeat coniugis socero mei:
 lubricus per saxa retro Sisyphum volvat lapis.
 vos quoque, urnis quas foratis inritus ludit labor,
 Danaides, coite: vestras hic dies quaerit manus.
 nunc meis vocata sacris, noctium sidus, veni 750

metrical reasons (cf. V. A. 12, 848). 734. **scelerum artifex**: Medea (cf. v. 121 n.). 735. **discreta ponit**: separates, distinguishes. 737. **verba**: magic incantations. 739. **mundus tremit**: nature shudders. 742. Cf. *alligat*, V. A. 6, 439. 748. **supplicis**: for *supplicis*, abl. abs. with *remissis*. The lines following give details. **thalamos novos**: of Jason and Creusa (for a possible sense of *novos* cf. v. 894 n.). 745. **Pirenidas**: acc. plural of *Pirenis*, adjective from *Pirene*, the name of a famous fountain at Corinth. Tantalus is variously described as having been king of Lydia, of Phrygia, of Argos and of Corinth. Our author evidently adopts the last version here. 746. **socero**: Creon, who, as another king of Corinth, is named in connection with Tantalus. 749. **vestras...manus**: The Danaides had slain their husbands, and the crime which Medea contemplated was worthy of them. 750. **vocata...veni**: The participle agrees with *tu*, the subject of *veni*, and is feminine because Hecate, not *sidus*, is the thought-antecedent of *tu*; *induta* and *minax*, v. 751, have the same agreement. **sidus**: apposi-

pessimos induta vultus, fronte non una minax.

Tibi more gentis vinculo solvens comam
 secreta nudo nemora lustravi pede
 et evocavi nubibus siccis aquas
 egique ad imum maria, et Oceanus graves 755
 interius undas aestibus victis dedit;
 pariterque mundus lege confusa aetheris
 et solem et astra vidit et vetitum mare
 tetigistis, ursae. temporum flexi vices:
 aestiva tellus floruit cantu meo, 760
 coacta messem vidit hibernam Ceres;
 violenta Phasis vertit in fontem vada
 et Hister, in tot ora divisus, truces
 compressit undas omnibus ripis piger.

Sonuere fluctus, tumuit insanum mare 765
 tacente vento; nemoris antiqui domus
 amisit umbras, vocis imperio meae
 die reducto; Phoebus in medio stetit
 Hyadesque nostris cantibus motae labant:
 adesse sacris tempus est, Phoebe, tuis. 770

Tibi haec cruenta sorta texuntur manu,
 novena quae serpens ligat,
 tibi haec Typhoeus membra quae discors tulit,

tive to *tu*. 751. *fronte non una*: cf. *triformis*, v. 7 n. 752. Having finished the solemn invocation Medea recounts the wonders she has wrought with the aid of these powers. *more gentis*: with *solvens*. 753. *nudo...pede*: cf. *nuda pedem*, O. M. 7, 183. 758. *et solem et astra*: i. e., at the same time. *vetitum tetigistis*: cf. v. 404 n. 759. *temporum...vices*: the seasons. I have caused spring flowers to bloom in summer, grain to ripen in winter, and water to flow up hill. 763. *Hister*: the Danube in its lower course. *tot ora*: cf. Tacitus, Ger. 1, 3; Pliny, N. H. 4, 24. 768. *in medio*: in mid-heaven. 769. *Hyades*: taken as a representative constellation. *labant*: falter in their course. 771. *tibi*: for thee, i. e., for Hecate. *cruenta*: abl. 772. *novena...ligat*: each bound with nine serpent-colls. *Novena* agrees with *serpens*; *quae* is acc. plur. 773. *discors*: rebellious.

qui regna concussit Iovis.
 vectoris istic perfidi sanguis inest, 775
 quem Nessus expirans dedit.
 Oetaeus isto cinere defecit rogos,
 qui virus Herculeum bibit.
 piaae sororis, impiae matris, facem
 ultriciis Althaeae vides. 780
 reliquit istas invio plumas specu
 Harpyia, dum Zeten fugit.
 his adice pinnae sauciae Stymphalidos
 Lernaean passae spicula.
 sonuistis, arae, tripodas agnosco meos 785
 favente commotos dea.

Video Triviae currus agiles,
 non quos pleno lucida vultu
 pernox agitat, sed quos facie
 lurida maesta, cum Thessalicis 790
 vexata minis caelum freno
 propiore legit. sic face tristem
 pallida lucem funde per auras,

Typhoeus: one of the *gigantes* (cf. v. 410 n.). 775. **vectoris:** Nessus the centaur, who served as ferryman at the river Evenus (cf. v. 641 n.). 777. Cf. Herc. Oet. 725 ff. 779. **impiae:** cf. note on *impius*, v. 645. **facem:** the fire-brand on whose preservation Meleager's life depended (cf. v. 645 n.). With *ultriciis Althaeae* cf. *matris iratae*, v. 646. It is fitting for Medea, about to slay her children, to think of Althaea, who had caused the death of her son. 782. **dum...fugit:** cf. O. M. 7, 2-4; V. A. 8, 211-213. 785. **tripodas:** (a short) acc. plur. of the Greek *tripus*. 787-842. Here follows a rhapsody in anapests, which fairly entitles the speaker to the epithet *maenas* used by herself in v. 806 and applied to her by the chorus in v. 849. 787. **Triviae:** Hecate, so called because her shrines were frequently placed at points where *three* roads met. 790. **lurida:** nom. **maesta:** abl. **Thessalicis minis:** An eclipse of sun or moon was a cause of great terror in ancient times, and when one occurred attempts were made to avert the catastrophe it was supposed to threaten by the beating of drums and the blowing of trumpets (cf. Tacitus, Ann. 1, 28, 3; Juvenal, Sat. 6, 442). 791. **caelum...legit:** sweeps through the sky (cf. *pontum legit:* V. A. 2, 207). 793. **pallida:** nom.

horrore novo terre populos
 inque auxilium, Dictynna, tuum 795
 pretiosa sonent aera Corinthi.
 tibi sanguineo caespite sacrum
 sollemne damus, tibi de medio
 rapta sepulchro fax nocturnos
 sustulit ignes, tibi mota caput 800
 flexa voces cervice dedi,
 tibi funereo de more iacens
 passos cingit vitta capillos,
 tibi iactatur tristis Stygia
 ramus ab unda, tibi nudato 805
 pectore maenas sacro feriam
 bracchia cultro. manet noster
 sanguis ad aras: assuesce, manus,
 stringere ferrum carosque pati
 posse cruores—sacrum laticem 810
 percussa dedi.
 quodsi nimium saepe vocari
 quereris votis, ignosce precor;
 causa vocandi, Persei, tuos
 saepius arcus una atque eadem est 815
 semper, Iason.
 tu nunc vestes tinge Creusae,
 quas cum primum sumpserit, imas

796. *pretiosa...aera*: 'Corinthian bronzes' were proverbially fine and valuable. Here the word seems to mean musical instruments of bronze.
 797. *caespite*: altar of turf. 806. *maenas*: appositive to the subject of *feriam* (see v. 388 n.; v. 787 n.; v. 849). *sacro*: with *cultro*.
 807. *manet*: from *manere*, not *manere*. 809. *caros...cruores*: another intimation of her purpose (cf. vv. 26 n., 550, 848). She calls upon the sword to taste her own blood (cf. *feriam bracchia*, v. 806), that it may not hesitate when called upon to drink the same from the veins of her sons. 810. *sacrum laticem*: her blood—fulfilment of the promise in *feriam*, v. 806. 813. *ignosce*: sc. *mihi*, or take absolutely. 814. *Persei*: voc. Hecate is so called as being the daughter of Perseus and granddaughter of Persa and Sol (cf. Statius, *Theb.* 4, 482; also *Perseides*

urat serpens flamma medullas.
 ignis fulvo clusus in auro 820
 latet obscurus, quem mihi caeli
 qui furta luit viscere feto
 dedit et docuit condere vires
 arte, Prometheus. dedit et tenui
 sulphure tectos Mulciber ignes, 825
 et vivacis fulgura flammae
 de cognato Phaethonte tuli.
 habeo mediae dona Chimaerae,
 habeo flammās usto tauri
 gutture raptas, quas permixto 830
 felle Medusae tacitum iussi
 servare malum.
 adde venenis stimulos, Hecate,
 donisque meis semina flammae
 condita serva. fallant visus 835
 tactusque ferant, meet in pectus
 venasque calor, stillent artus
 ossaque fument vincatque suas
 flagrante coma nova nupta faces.
 Vota tenentur; ter latratus 840
 audax Hecate dedit et sacros
 edidit ignes face lucifera.

herbae, O. R. A. 263). 820. *auro*: of her gift to the bride. 820-830. The poison she is concocting is described in its effect as if it were liquid fire, and then the mythical sources of fire are enumerated. 822. *furta*: the stealing of fire from heaven for man. *viscere feto*: cf. Vergil's *Abris renatis*, A. 6, 595-600. 823. *condere*: store up—here in the golden ornament (cf. *condita*, v. 835). 827. *cognato*: Phaethon was son and Medea granddaughter of the sun-god. 831. *tacitum*: latent. 835 ff. *visus*, *tactus*: acc. *artus*: nom. 840. *latratus*: Hecate was represented sometimes as having three heads (cf. *triformis*, v. 7, and especially *triceps*, O. M. 7, 194), one of a horse, one of a lion, one of a dog; and more often as merely attended by dogs, whose barking announced her

Peracta vis est omnis: huc natos voca,
 pretiosa per quos dona nubenti feras.
 ite, ite, nati, matris infaustae genus, 845
 placate vobis munere et multa prece
 dominam ac novercam. vadite et celeres domum
 referte gressus, ultimo amplexu ut fruatur.

CHORVS

Quonam cruenta maenas
 praeceps amore saevo 850
 rapitur? quod impotenti
 facinus parat furore?
 vultus citatus ira
 riget et caput feroci
 quatiens superba motu 855
 regi minatur ultro.
 quis credat exulem?
 flagrant genae rubentes,
 pallor fugat ruborem,
 nullum vagante forma 860
 servat diu colorem.
 huc fert pedes et illuc,
 ut tigris orba natis
 cursu furente lustrat
 Gangeticum nemus. 865

approach (cf. Oed. 569: *latravit Hecates turba*; V. A. 6, 257). 843 ff.
 The frenzy is gone, and there remains only sullen determination. 846.
 placate: win. 848. ultimo: To her hearers the word would have
 its ordinary sense, to herself another, far deeper. 849. cruenta:
 nom. The sense may be literally 'blood-stained' (cf. vv. 806-810), or it
 may refer to her past crimes—the murder of brother and uncle. 850.
 amore saevo: her passion for Jason (cf. v. 398 n.). 854. riget: is
 set. 856. Does not stand on the defensive, but dares attack. 857.
 Sc. *eam esse*. 858-865. The chorus observes Medea's intense emotion,

frenare nescit iras
 Medea, non amores;
 nunc ira amorque causam
 iunxere: quid sequetur?
 quando efferet Pelasgis 870
 nefanda Colchis arvis
 gressum metuque solvet
 regnum simulque reges?
 nunc, Phoebe, mitte currus
 nullo morante loro, 875
 nox condat alma lucem,
 mergat diem timendum
 dux noctis Hesperus.

evinced by change of color and uncertain gait (cf. *vv.* 862-869). 866,
 867. Cf. Medea's own expression, *vv.* 397, 398. 871. *Colchis*: nom.,
 referring to Medea. 874. 'Drive swiftly the sun-chariot.' Medea's
 reprieve was to end with the day, hence the prayer that night might come
 quickly. 876. *alma*: The epithet commonly applied to *dies*, *sol*, *lux*
 and words of kindred sense here is given to *nox* (cf. *Tro.* 438). 878.
dux noctis: cf. *geminī praeuia temporis*, *v.* 71.

ACT V

[*A messenger enters from the palace, with news of the catastrophe within.*]

NVNT. Periere cuncta, concidit regni status.
nata atque genitor cinere permixto iacent. 880

CHOR. Qua fraude capti? NVNT. Qua solent
reges capi:

donis. CHOR. In illis esse quis potuit dolus?

NVNT. Et ipse miror vixque iam facto malo
potuisse fieri credo. quis cladis modus?

avidus per omnem regiae partem furit 885
ut iussus ignis: iam domus tota occidit,

urbi timetur. CHOR. Vnda flammas opprimat.

NVNT. Et hoc in ista clade mirandum accidit:
alit unda flammas, quoque prohibetur magis,
magis ardet ignis: ipsa praesidia occupat. 890

NVTR. Effer citatum sede Pelopea gradum,
Medea, praeceps quaslibet terras pete.

MED. Egone ut recedam? si profugissem
prius,
ad hoc redirem. nuptias specto novas.

884. **quis cladis modus**: Mss. assign this question to the chorus. *Modus* may mean either manner or measure, probably the latter here (cf. *omnem, tota, urbi timetur*). 890. **praesidia**: The water. The fire is so fierce as to devour what ordinarily is a safeguard against it. 891. **Pelopea**: Pelops was the son of Tantalus (cf. v. 745 n.), and became king of Pisa in Elis. From his name the whole southern peninsula of Greece came to be called Pelops' island, *Peloponnesus*. Here the adjective is applied to Corinth either as the home of his father (v. 745 n.) or in the sense merely of Grecian (cf. V. A. 2, 193). 893. **egone ut recedam**: An indignant question, implying that the act is inconceivable (cf. v. 929). 894. **nuptias novas**: cf. *thalamos novos*, v. 748; *thalamis novis*, Tro. 900. A new kind of marriage in that the scene is to be one of mourning

quid, anime, cessas? sequere felicem impetum. 895
 pars ultionis ista, qua gaudes, quota est?
 amas adhuc, furiose, si satis est tibi
 caelebs Iason. quaere poenarum genus
 haut usitatum iamque sic temet para:
 fas omne cedat, abeat expulsus pudor; 900
 vindicta levis est quam ferunt purae manus.
 incumbe in iras teque languentem excita
 penitusque veteres pectore ex imo impetus
 violentus hauri. quidquid admissum est adhuc,
 pietas vocetur. hoc age et faxis sciant 905
 quam levia fuerint quamque vulgaris notae
 quae commodavi scelera. prolusit dolor
 per ista noster: quid manus poterant rudes
 audere magnum? quid puellaris furor?
 Medea nunc sum; crevit ingenium malis. 910
 Iuvat, iuvat rapuisse fraternum caput;
 artus iuvat secuisse et arcano patrem
 spoliasse sacro, iuvat in exitium senis
 armasse natas. quaere materiam, dolor:
 ad omne facinus non rudem dextram afferes. 915
 Quo te igitur, ira, mittis, aut quae perfido
 intendis hosti tela? nescio quid ferox
 decrevit animus intus et nondum sibi

instead of rejoicing. 897. You love him still if you are satisfied with merely depriving him of his bride. *furiose*: masculine, agreeing with *anime*. 898. *caelebs*: unwedded, single, widowed. Both *caelebs* and *viduus* are used indifferently of widowed persons and those who never have married. 899. *haut*: *haud*. 902. *languentem*: 'If you waver in your purpose.' 905. *pietas vocetur*: in comparison with what is contemplated now. *faxis*: *feceris*. 907. *prolusit*: took exercise by way of preparation for greater deeds (cf. *proludens fatis*, Tro. 182). 910. *Medea nunc sum*: cf. v. 171. 912. *arcano*, *sacro*: the golden fleece (cf. *arcanus aries*, Thy. 226). 913. *senis*: Pallas (v. 133 n). 915. *non rudem*: cf. *rudes*, v. 908. Her hand is no longer unpracticed in crime. 916. *perfido hosti*: Jason, as in v. 920. 918. *nondum*: Yet it is clear that the idea had occurred to her at least as far back as her

audet fateri. stulta properavi nimis:
 ex paelice utinam liberos hostis meus 920
 aliquos haberet—quidquid ex illo tuum est,
 Creusa peperit. placuit hoc poenae genus,
 meritoque placuit: ultimum, agnosco, scelus
 animo parandum est—liberi quondam mei,
 vos pro paternis sceleribus poenas date. 925

Cor pepulit horror, membra torpescunt gelu
 pectusque tremuit. ira discessit loco
 materque tota coniuge expulsa redit.
 egone ut meorum liberum ac prolis meae
 fundam cruorem? melius, a, demens furor! 930
 incognitum istud facinus ac dirum nefas
 a me quoque absit; quod scelus miseri luent?
 scelus est Iason genitor et maius scelus
 Medea mater—occidant, non sunt mei.—
 pereant? mei sunt. crimine et culpa carent, 935
 sunt innocentes: fateor, et frater fuit.
 quid, anime, titubas? ora quid lacrimae rigant
 variamque nunc huc ira, nunc illuc amor
 diducit? anceps aestus incertam rapit;
 ut saeva rapidi bella cum venti gerunt 940
 utrimque fluctus maria discordes agunt
 dubiumque fervet pelagus, haut aliter meum
 cor fluctuatur. ira pietatem fugat
 iramque pietas—cede pietati, dolor.

Interview with Jason (*vv.* 549, 550), and hints of her growing purpose are given in *vv.* 565, 848. 920. *paelice*: Creusa (*cf.* 462 n.). 922. *Creusa peperit*: She first wishes that her rival had left children behind her, and then exclaims that Jason's children (though her own as well) must now be thought of as Creusa's. 923. *ultimum*: crowning. 926 ff. With this wavering between right and wrong impulses *cf.* Ovid's account of Medea's reflections at first sight of Jason (*M.* 7, 9-99), and Dido's hesitation in yielding to her passion for Aeneas (*V. A.* 4, 1-55). 928. The fury of the outraged wife gives way to the tender affection of the mother. *tota*: probably *nom.* 931. *incognitum*: unheard-of. 936. *frater*: *sc. meus*. Absyrtus had been innocent and yet was sacri-

Huc, cara proles, unicum afflictæ domus 945
 solamen, huc vos ferte et infusos mihi
 coniungite artus. habeat incolumes pater,
 dum et mater habeat—urguet exilium ac fuga.
 iam iam meo rapiuntur avulsi e sinu.
 flentes, gementes osculis—pereant patri, 950
 periæ matri. rursus increscit dolor
 et fervet odium, repetit invitam manum
 antiqua Erinyes—ira, qua ducis, sequor.
 utinam superbæ turba Tantalidos meo
 exisset utero bisque septenos parens 955
 natos tulissem! sterilis in poenas fui—
 fratri patrique quod sat est, peperì duos.

Quonam ista tendit turba Furiarum impotens?
 quem quaerit aut quo flammeos ictus parat,
 aut cui cruentas agmen infernum faces 960
 intentat? ingens anguis excusso sonat
 tortus flagello. quem trabe infesta petit
 Megaera?—cuius umbra dispersis venit
 incerta membris? frater est, poenas petit—
 dabimus, sed omnes. fige luminibus faces, 965
 lania, perure, pectus en Furiis patet.

Discedere a me, frater; ultrices deas
 manesque ad imos ire securas iube:
 mihi me relinque et utere hac, frater, manu

ficed, why not her sons as well? 950. *pereant*: be lost to. 954. *turba Tantalidos*: the brood of Niobe, who was the mother of seven sons and seven daughters (O. M. 6, 182). 956. *sterilis fui*: My two are not enough. Another shade is given the thought in the following verse—as if in slaying her sons she were sacrificing one each to her father and her brother. 959. *quo parat*: 'Against whom are they preparing to direct their fiery darts?' 961. *anguis*: cf. v. 14. 962. *trabe*: torch (cf. *facem*, v. 15). 964. *incerta*: indistinct (cf. *incertam lunam*, V. A. 6, 270). 965. *sed omnes*: My atonement shall be complete. *fige faces*: Thrust fire-brands into my eyes, tear, burn. The sudden apparition of her murdered brother throws her into a frenzy of rage and despair. 967. *ultrices deas*: the Furies (cf. v. 18 n.; also *ultrices Diras*,



quae strinxit ensem—victima manes tuos 970
 placamus ista. quid repens affert sonus?
 parantur arma meque in exitium petunt.
 excelsa nostrae tecta conscendam domus
 caede incohata. perge tu mecum comes.
 tuum quoque ipsa corpus hinc mecum aveham. 975
 nunc hoc age, anime: non in occulto tibi est
 perdenda virtus; approba populo manum. [*Exit.*]

[*Enter Jason, hurrying with those who answer his call to attack the house of Medea.*]

JAS. Quicumque regum cladibus fidus doles,
 concurre, ut ipsam sceleris auctorem horridi
 capiamus. huc, huc fortis armiferi cohors 980
 conferte tela, vertite ex imo domum.

MED. [*Appearing upon the housetop.*] Iam iam re-
 cepi sceptrā germanum patrem,
 spoliūque Colchi pecudis auratae tenent:
 rediere regna, rapta virginitas redit.
 o placida tandem numina, o festum diem, 985
 o nuptialem! vade, perfectum est scelus;
 vindicta nondum: perage, dum faciunt manus.
 quid nunc moraris, anime? quid dubitas potens?
 iam cecidit ira. paenitet facti, pudet.

V. A. 4, 473). 970. *victima...ista*: One of her sons, who is slain at this point. 974. *tu*: to the living child. 978. Jason appears on the scene, calling upon the loyal subjects of Creon to avenge the death of their king and their princess. He does not see Medea till v. 995, and is recognized by her first in v. 992. *regum*: Creon and his daughter. *quicumque*: subject of *doles*. 980. *armiferi*: voc. *cohors*: appositive to *armiferi*. 982-984. 'I have recovered all I gave up for my lover'—i. e., this moment of vengeance is worth them all. She had reminded Jason in their interview of what she had lost for his sake, enumerating essentially the items given here (cf. vv. 477-489). 984. *redit*: contracted from *redit* (cf. *peti*, v. 248). 985. *placida*: propitious. 987. *perage*: sc. *vindictam*. 988. *quid dubitas potens*: 'Why do you hesitate, having the power?' 989. A momentary

quid, misera, feci? misera? paeniteat licet, 990
 feci—voluptas magna me invitam subit,
 et ecce crescit. derat hoc unum mihi,
 spectator iste. nil adhuc facti reor:
 quidquid sine isto fecimus sceleris perit.
 IAS. En ipsa tecti parte praecipiti imminet. 995
 huc rapiat ignes aliquis, ut flammis cadat
 suis perusta. MED. Congere extremum tuis
 natis, Iason, funus, ac tumultum strue:
 coniunx socerque iusta iam functis habent,
 a me sepulti; natus hic fatum tulit, 1000
 hic te vidente dabitur exitio pari.
 IAS. Per numen omne perque communes fugas
 torosque, quos non nostra violavit fides,
 iam parce nato. si quod est crimen, meum est:
 me dedo morti; noxium macta caput. 1005
 MED. Hac qua recusas, qua doles, ferrum exigam.
 i nunc, superbe, virginum thalamos pete,
 relinque matres. IAS. Vnus est poenae satis.
 MED. Si posset una caede satiari haec manus,
 nullam petisset. ut duos perimam, tamen 1010
 nimium est dolori numerus angustus meo.

feeling of regret, giving way almost immediately (v. 991) to a fierce joy at sight of her husband and thought of his grief. 991. *invitam*: in spite of myself. 992. *derat*: *deerat* (cf. *derit*, v. 403). *hoc*: explained by its appositive *spectator iste*, i. e., Jason, whom she now sees approaching. 993. *nil...reor*: As he had not seen the death of his first son it counted for nothing (see next verse, and cf. vv. 275-280, 500, 501). 994. *perit*: probably perfect (cf. *redit*, v. 984)—is lost, is wasted. 995. *ipsa*: nom.—Medea. 998. *funus*: for *rogum*. 999. *iusta...functis*: the service due the dead (cf. *iusta Troiae*, Tro. 65). *Functis* is for *defunctis*. In sending her fiery gift to Creusa, and by that means destroying the royal palace with all it contained, Medea had provided for the cremation of Jason's wife and father-in-law, and she now tauntingly challenges him to carry out his threat (v. 996) to burn her house, and so perform the same rites for his sons. 1000, 1001. *hic, hic*: pointing to the dead and to the living boy. 1006. *hac*: here in the body of our son. *ferrum exigam*: cf. *ferrum exigatur*, v. 125 n. 1009. *una*

IAS. Iam perage coeptum facinus, haut ultra
precor, 1014

moramque saltem supplicis dona meis. 1015

MED. Perfruere lento scelere, ne propera, dolor:
meus dies est: tempore accepto utimur.

IAS. Infesta, memet perime. MED. Misereri
iubes.

bene est, peractum est. plura non habui, dolor,
quae tibi litarem. lumina huc tumida alleva, 1020
ingrate Iason. coniugem agnoscis tuam?

sic fugere soleo. patuit in caelum via:

squamosa gemini colla serpentes iugo

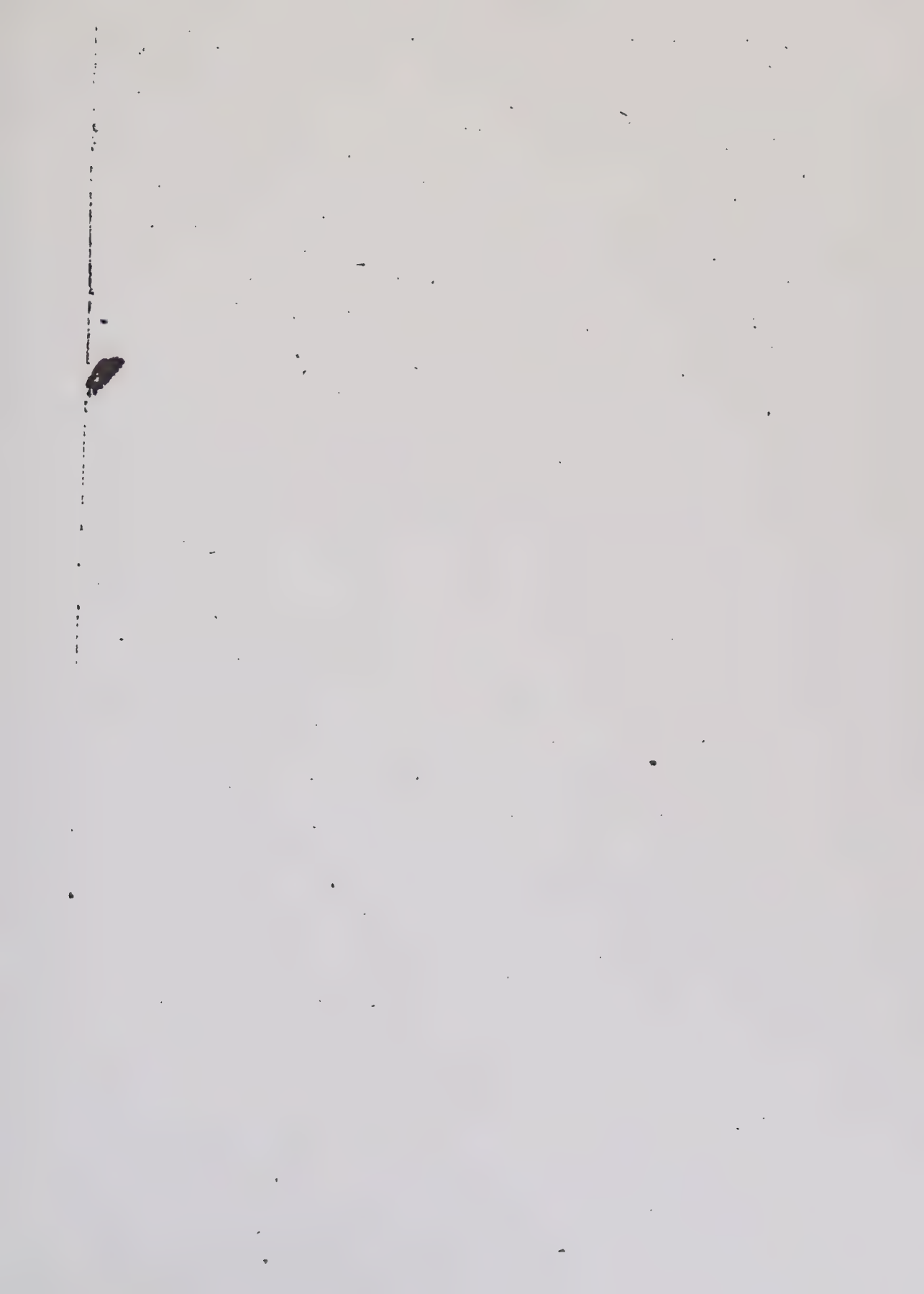
summissa praebent. recipe iam natos, parens;

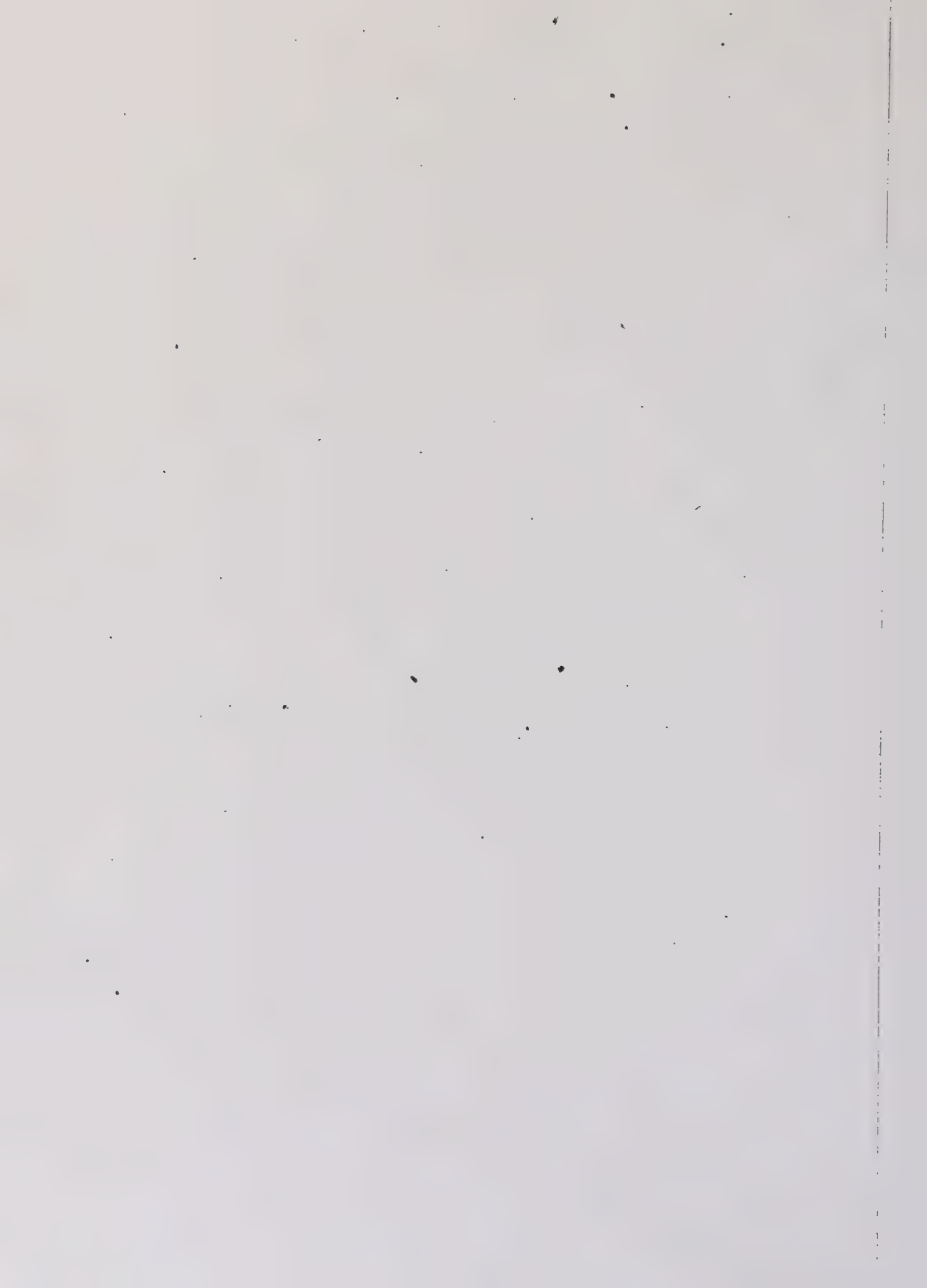
ego inter auras aliti curru vehar. [*Flies away.*] 1025

IAS. Per alta vade spatia sublimi aethere,
testare nullos esse, qua veheris, deos.

caede: *unius caede*. 1015. *supplicis*: *supplicis*. *dona*: imperative. 1017. *meus dies est*: i. e., the day granted her by Creon (v. 295); so *tempore accepto*. At this point she strikes the second of her sons, and thus provokes Jason's despairing cry, *memet perime* (v. 1018). 1022. *alio*: in a chariot drawn by dragons (see next verse, and cf. O. M. 7, 220). 1024. 'Parent take back your children now.' With this parting taunt she throws the bodies down to Jason, and herself mounts her aerial chariot.

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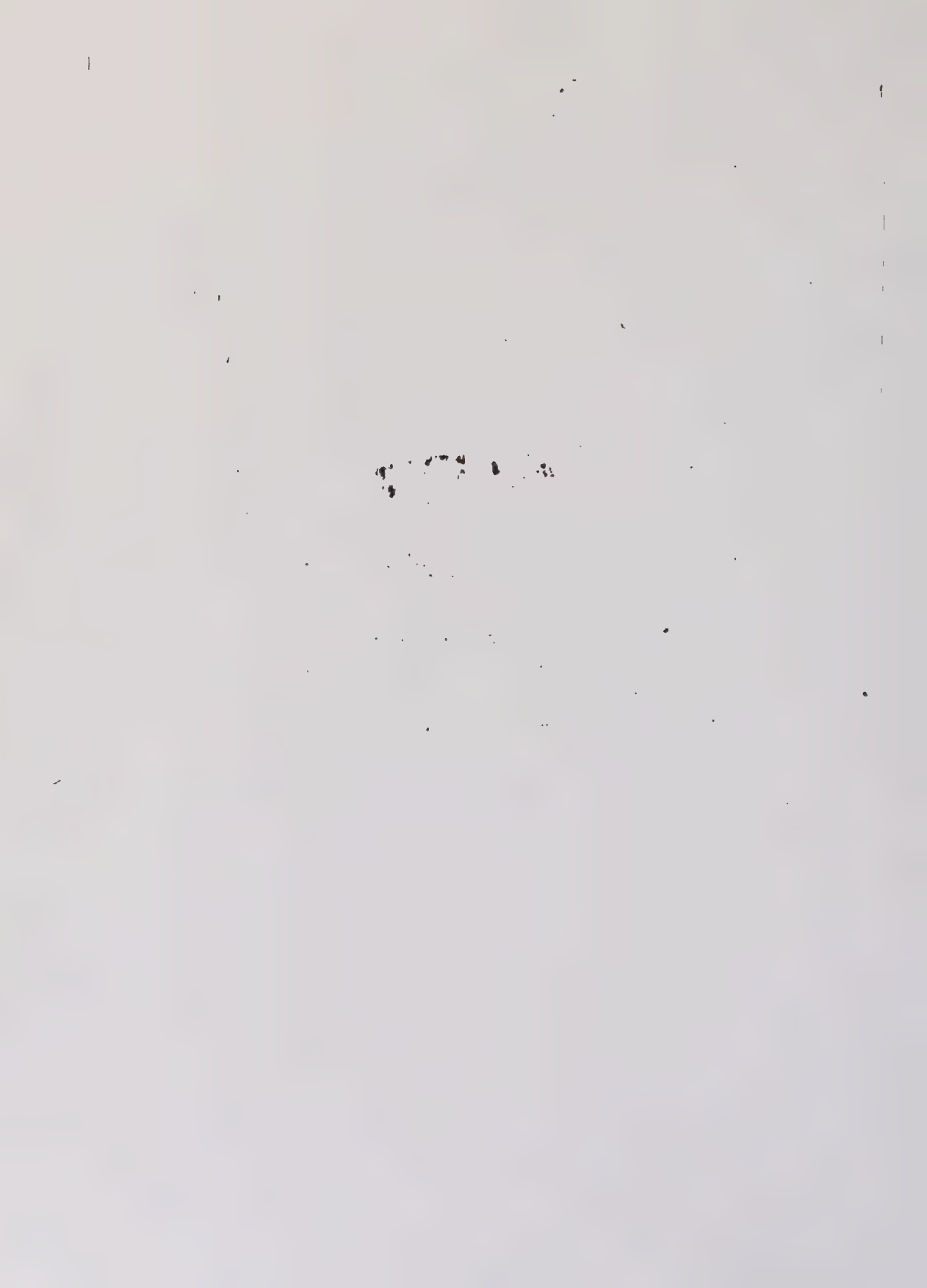


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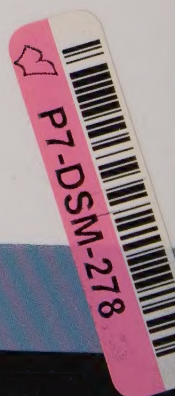
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